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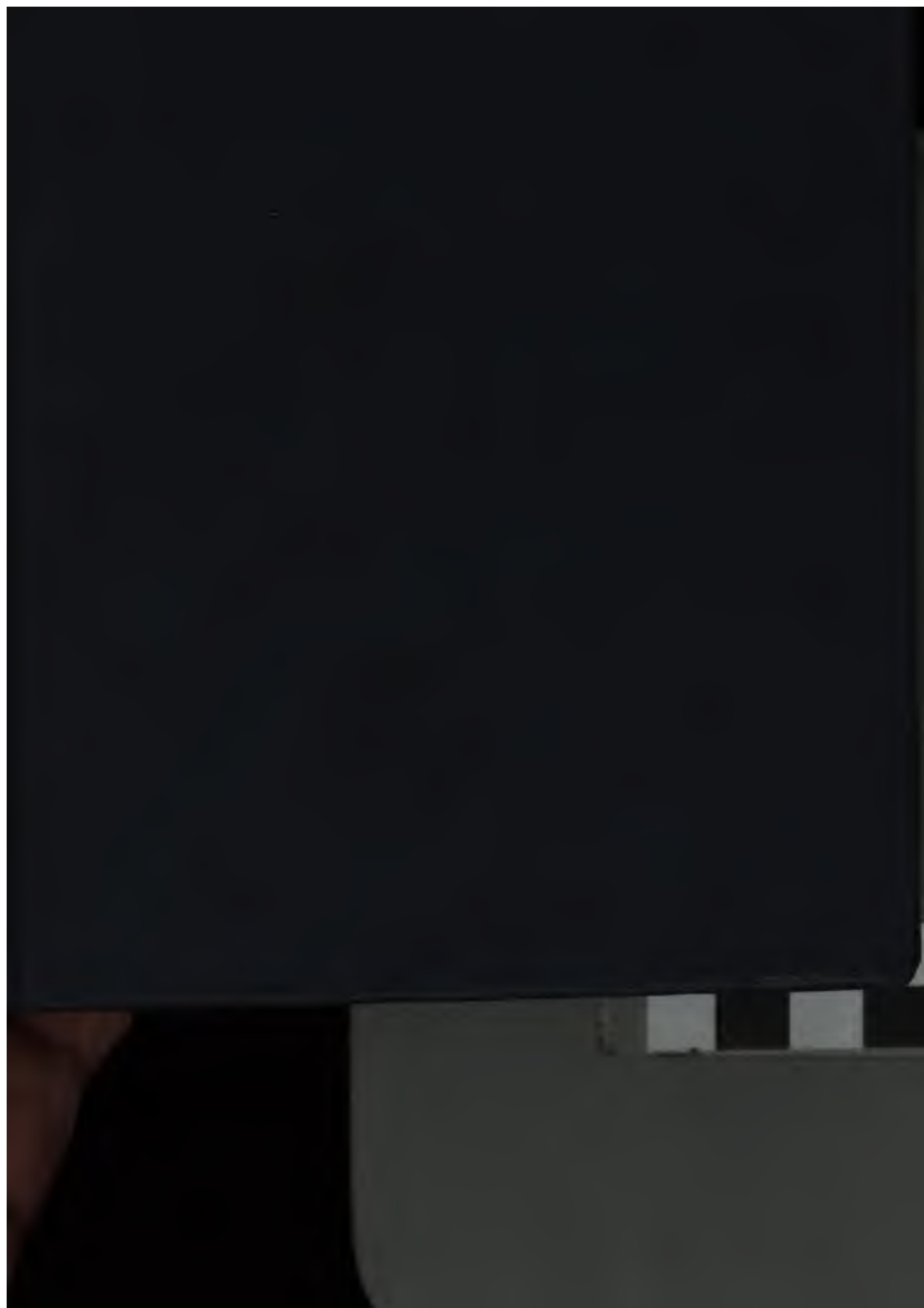
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**HERE AND BEYOND:**

**OR,**

**THE NEW MAN, THE TRUE MAN.**

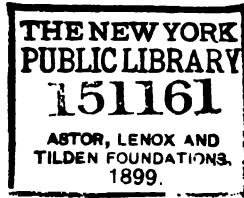
**BY**

**HUGH SMITH CARPENTER.**

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## P R E F A C E .

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THESE thoughts relate to the symmetry of soul development. There has prevailed a current notion, that a life swayed by supernatural forces must be an unnatural life. And among those who dreaded such an influence upon themselves, a converse notion has found credence, that manliness and a genial virtue can thrive, in the lack of sacred faith.

In the church, there has been too much neglected the study of scriptural proportions. The worldling has, therefore, taken leave to curl his sneers. Nothing so strengthens scoffing, nothing so expands its range, as the spectacle of a crude, unshapely, and incongruous pietism. It is easy for an adroit sophistry to put contempt upon defect, as if it were deceit, and reject distortion, as if it were delusion. In this way it has come about, that there is less genuine religion accredited in the world than is really found there, scant and fragmentary as the actual amount may be. And this skepticism of the concrete religion among men, is the mother of more desperate skepticisms.

Nothing more disastrous can befall a man, either morally or intellectually, than an invidious opinion of the faiths and fervors that linger in the normal forms of religion. A fictitious

humanitarianism volubly asserts itself as a more excellent way. It strikes against church fashions and church formulas with its clenched knuckles, and hearkening scornfully to the sound, pronounces the church a hollow body, as if one who should strike resonantly the cupola dome of a dwelling, should denounce the building as an empty and uninhabitable shell. In such ill logic, the sound of sacred praise is treated as the whine of cant; the speech of devotion is accounted flippant or frivolous. There may have been occasion given for some perplexity, by the irregularities of the church, as there always is some occasion for confused perception. Formality in the faith of the church is, in its nature, fatal to the faith of the world. Yet formality is sometimes not a death, but a disease. The infection may be death-dealing in its spread, when the subjects first infected, survive and recover.

In a neglect or decadence of Christian culture, which is but comparative, there may arise a culture unchristian which is absolute and superlative—the culture of a bold, rationalistic stare, which is only the apology for a helpless and infidel blindness.

It substitutes faith in the deity of man for faith in the manhood of Deity. It attempts to put the “godlike,” as it is phrased, in the place of godliness; that is, to put a portrait, or a statue, in the place of a person. It cherishes an æsthetic ideal of reason, instead of a practical power of soul.

The church is but half aware of the currency of this sentimentalism, through the channels of popular literature, and the avenues of intellectual resort. Still less is the church aware of its own fault in the premises, its own provocation, given in lax nurture of Christian manhood, and loose notions of prac-

tical character. But whenever and wherever Christianity arouses itself to duty, it begins to notice the irreverent air, the changed tone, with which it is accosted by the souls it would save. It meets this wayward humanity at every turn. To rail at it in pulpit invective, is as impotent as to berate the present style of living, or the present fashions of dress. Like them, it is, after all, only a fashion of the mind, a style of thought, to be rescued and consecrated.

It is time to show to men, quietly, that sanctity and sanctimony are not alike in fact, because to the ignorant or the foreigner the syllables have somewhat the same sound. There is a vast difference between "the form of sound words," so often referred to, and the formal sound of words, which mere religionists would put in their place. Would that preachers and writers gave heed to it more closely! For the mere religionists make the sheer rationalists, all the world over. A sweet, unaffected religion in the church, will serve the same purpose, amid the world's corrosions and decays, which the fragrance of forest-field and garden secures, amid the debris of the earth's surface, or which the salt air of the sea effects, amid the sea-wastes, neutralizing them, rising over them, compelling them to acquiesce in the salubrity of the atmosphere, the balm of the breeze.

These little chapters, however, while they spring in the impression thus expressed, appeal to those who confess their need of faith, rather than to those who claim to have it. They maintain that the development of true manhood, the only genuine symmetry of character in this life, is that which accepts and articulates the gospel of a life beyond. They at-



tempt no expostulation with the dogmatic or the disdainful. They attempt a suggestion, an illustration, to the thoughtful. They insist, that the only regeneration of the human spirit is in the representative and redeeming humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let them speak frankly, and if in no better way, cursorily, with the love and the latitude of a conversation, which is nowhere obliged to accurate adjustment, which exhibits no performance, and demands no criticism.

BROOKLYN, *June*, 1859.

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**H**E who dwells in a valley can drink of the stream, though its source be inaccessible in the mountain clefts.

So a soul may taste the flow of spiritual life, though it be at the same time utterly unable to trace a course of theology. Theology climbs the mountain, or clambers and slips. Religion dwells by the stream. A man must return from his theology in order to reach his religion; and then he will find that his religion is his supply of theology.

The secret of spiritual life is in the cross of Christ. The secret of his cross is in his crown. The secret of his crown is hidden in the nature of God. And that natural theology must be mistaken which bids the soul define the nature of God before it may take the blessing of God. And all that spiritual theology must be mistaken which determines to know what Christ is

in the essence of glory, before it consents to know what Christ is in itself the hope of glory.

There is an analogy between human entrance on this mode of existence, which we call Time, and human approach to that mode of existence which we call Eternity.

There is a Time Gospel.

In order to hear it, we may conceive for ourselves a state of preëxistence, so that we shall seem to be looking forward to an earth birth, just as here we anticipate a life to come.

Imagine a concourse of human spirits unborn as yet to any flesh life, but lingering in a preliminary and nebulous existence. Shadow books are in their spectral grasp. Among them there are ethereal poets that murmur spirit cadences almost articulate, the melodious hints and instincts of a more substantial life. Messengers from another sphere announce such a future more distinctly. Preachers rise, who are shadows like themselves, and yet seem to have already a denser and more solid organism—a fibrous mystery, which, to many, is too opaque to be real. In their tampering with materialism, and their tints of form, these soul preachers become obscure to the native tenuity of that frameless lot. They interpret the Gospel of a bodily substantial life; they condition it for each one on a personal acceptance of the headship and the life of the human race as already defined upon this globe.

Many of the throng to whom this Gospel is proposed decline it, and drop away through flutters of a partial embryonic consciousness to ultimate inanity and void. Others believe, obey, and grasping any filament of substantial space that touches them, however slender and untraced, begin to weave about them the vesture of this organic mode, as albumen forms in eggs or air cells deliquesce to water, and find themselves at length awake, alive, in human infancy.

This would be a sketch of fancy. But the only difference between their introduction to this life and our introduction to that before us, is that they are unconscious of what is awaiting them, in other words, that in point of fact there is no preëxistence on the threshold of this world, while to us, upon the verges of the next, there is.

But for them, as for us, the terms of life would be terms of simple trust in representative arrangement and simple acceptance of previous provision.

Hence this is the law of *child-life* in nature. Each one is born a child, helpless, dependent. His bond of being is to fulfill the plan of nature within him and around him. Two forces engird and educe vitality, which it must learn to trust. They are the forces of Love and of Law. Mother love is the first token of God's notice, the first trace of God's care. Father power and right construct order and constitute home.

Acceptance is the instinct of life. And it is by this

instinct that spirits live, as animals by theirs. Reason is just the choice of instinct, the balance in which it weighs things and thoughts. Faith is the instinct that accepts a life to come on its own terms.

We find this globe prepared for man just as the breast is prepared for infancy.

Humanity comes as readily to its lot here, as the child to its mother's arms. The globe nurses these children by taking them upon its lap. Its surface life is a process of lactation that they may be fed and grow.

Provision meets and matches the instinctive quest.

Wherever we see the trustful creature coming, we see the careful God providing. He provides as a householder, a hospitable host, for expected guests. Creatures come, as guests, just when he expects them. In every element, in every realm, there is a nicety of adaptation. The sea shell plates its grooved mail about the shell fish. The bark knits its fibrous rings around the tree. The bud is wrapped in calix care until it is a ready bloom. Fur muffles the Arctic creature's skin. Feathers grow on skins of birds. No one can tell why or how the one skin secretes furry down, and the other downy plumes. These things do not make each what it is. Yet they find and fit each as it is. The nest charms the fledgeling until it can fly. At the moment when it can fly, it is disposed to fly. At the moment when it tries to fly, it can fly. The young stag begins to scent water for himself. There is a water pool de-

terminated by the scent. The lion's roar that craves his meat, is the lion's roar that quells his prey.

The heart of man obeys the same instinct, and finds the same fitness. When young hearts begin to love, accepting the law that invests them, they begin to find loves. The instinct of solitude discerns the beauty of solitary scenes. The impulse of companionship meets with companions. Social thought accepts the laws and the facts of society. Home love nestles in the home that broods to enclose it. The hungry mouth no more readily finds food than the hungry mind finds truth. The thirsty lip loves water,—the thirsty spirit thrills to soothing syllables. Crisis concentrates strength, as cold air makes the blood tingle. Tasks of strength stir strength, as the clenched hand knots the muscles. Unusual need meets unusual supply. No man is prepared for the morrow. But the morrow prepares itself for every man, and so prepares every man for itself.

You have observed the aquarium. Within that little enclosure one may place animal life providing for plant life, and plant life providing for animal, in mutual moment of dependence;—the same element affording their separate aliment. The water in its consumption, is restored, and in its yieldings to each separate need, retained.

This terrestrial life is an aquarium, exhaustless in supply for all, because exactly fitted, and exactly furnished to the need of each.



The only life of every living thing is to take its portion then in its relation to all other portions—its portion in due season. It is the instinct of acceptance. The same acceptance will receive a portion, and secure a life in the adjoining world. That is the instinct of faith.

We are little children, after all; the tallest and most boisterous, still little children, that think these grounds a bleak common, a wilderness, without pathway or landmark; while we are only straying in our father's park, garden and lawned for us; or in our father's orchard, where we seem to have discovered by our wisdom the ripe, loaded fruit-trees, which his own hand planted for us, in our way. He has also other grounds and other grafts. To discover them, to invent them, to enjoy them, is to find them as they are, and to take them as we find them.

Provision for the first man—the man representative or collective, is adequate for all individuals. Our Maker gave this globe and its abundance to the human family, just as one might deed a piece of ground or bequeath an estate, to a man, his children and his heirs. In the same lineal descent he pledged his own justice and goodness for government and for guard. The represented race shares in the blessing of the representative. It shares, too, in his losses and his death. The soil is ours in right of succession only. It was once theirs who are not here to claim it. These fields were owned in other names, and marked and mapped in

other title deeds. The very acres of the sky on which we gaze, belonged to other eyes.

These joys are like the downy beds in lodging houses—other tired travelers have dreamed in them.

These glooms are but the ghosts that haunted former travelers. We only dream them in these haunted chambers.

Now, the individual claim of any man here on earth is his acceptance of his place in the human family ; his trust in the tenor and the terms of this provision.

Every hill has been built for man, standing patiently for him in generations. But it is his, who climbs it to seize the splendid prospect. If by climbing I accept it, it is mine. The water spring is filtered through its clay bed for man. If you dig to its flow, if you dip in its ripple, it is your well. The sun shines on this hemisphere as it shone ages ago—as it shone on ages of people, and unpeopled ages. If you throw your casement wide, the sun leaps into the room to greet you—it is your sun. There is the same general provision of the life to come. There is the same individuality of acceptance.

The essential difference between the groundwork of this life and that of the next, is a different reason of constitution in the latter. But that can make no difference in the principle of its reception. Forfeiture of this life by the first type of man occasions the founding of a higher life by the second. But we have noth-

ing whatever to do with that. Jesus Christ nowhere alludes to Adam. Jesus Christ nowhere speaks of Eden, or even of antiquity. As one comes to a hut of poverty, bringing relief, and does not stop to parley till the starving children are fed, so he gives the bread of life.

As one plows and plants in the soil which he finds, without analyzing the pulverized granules and debris of former organisms that compose it, so he undertakes and regenerates this human nature.

Again, the plastic power of a Divine Spirit is sovereign in spiritual life. But no more so is it than in physical endowment—in growths and graces of nature, and in the powers of the human frame. In neither case does the secret source of vital force interfere with the simple terms of vital action. Spirituality, as seen from without, is an absolute regeneration. But from within, a man can no more perceive his regeneration than he could perceive his first creation. That is God's part. This is his. Regenerate life, like all other, is to be studied in its growth. In its birth it is simply to be accepted.

It is but little that we know of Time. We are about as fit to describe it, as a traveler would be to describe the Oriental desert,—because he had crossed it, in a guided, guarded caravan.

In fact, the philosophic treatises of men, that range through Nature, resemble most the tourist's book, who,

because he has been led by a route, claims to know all about the region. The inductions of this sphere gathered by the race, and published by the ages, are but the pages of its daily journal, after all ; a scrap-book, scrawled hastily, while the generations were whirled through the land—"on time" of their mortality, and, for the most part, in the ruts and beaten dusts of previous generations. Of course, such a diary is odd with blunders, and confused by contradictions. They who come after us, make mistakes, because we made them, or else waste time in the puzzle to unlearn them. The clear truth of this world is its gospel law of living. And that is just as clear for the world to come.

The conclusion is distinct. There is nothing more supernatural in the world to come than there had been in this world.

Every thing there is natural to those who are there ; becomes natural as they come thither.

The terrestrial race has one man, or type of man, for its head ;—Nature teaches that. The race celestial has one man, or representative of man, for its head ;—what we call Revelation, teaches that. The earth was given to the Adam—the red-clay man and his heirs. The new heavens and new earth are given to the Christ-man—the Son of Man who is Son of God. The first man was of the earth, earthy ; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy,

such are they also that are earthy ; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

The *condition* of life everlasting is therefore just the condition of life temporal. It is, to surrender the being to the Saviour of the being. It is, to exercise the powers in full expectation of his pervading vitality. It is to take holiness trustfully, basing our intent to cherish it on his intent to give it. It is to come as natively into his world of ordered glory and of reconciliation between the finite and the infinite, as we came nakedly into this disordered and transition world.

This is to be born again, and to become as little children. It is not to make sure that we are strong ; it is to confess that we are strengthless. It is not to think a great deal, and say a great deal ; it is to stop saying and thinking. It is to take truth, as we have always taken food ; what we needed, what we could. It is to pillow the soul on his purpose, as we pillowed the head on a mother's heart. It is to look into the spiritual azure of Eternity, as our baby glances kindled on the atmospheric sky. It is to go forth falteringly, but bravely, upon the untried opportunities, as we crept and prattled on the nursery carpets ; and to climb services of difficulty, as we learned to climb the homestead stairs. It is to trust Christ's divinity, as we have trusted man's humanity, comprehending neither. It is to perceive and accredit the Divine faithfulness in the new man, as we have received that faithfulness in the first man.

And so it is to take eternal hope as instinctively as we have taken earthly hope; to take Christian growth as we have taken muscular growth; to study the walks of glory, as we have walked these paths and fields; to breathe the fragrances of coming heaven, as we have breathed these flower odors; to pass through mysteries, and leap over yawning doubts, as we have followed forest roads, and skipped across the ravine crags; to cherish the thoughts of spiritual fellowship, as we listen to the songs of wayside birds; to repose, when sorrow broods over us, as pilgrims pitch their tents, when evening drops its curtain; to hide under a prayerful shelter from temptation, as under a roof from the tempest; and to drop to mortal sleep, in death dust at last, as into night sleep at our proper bed-time, looking for the morrow morning calmly.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SECRET OF FAILURES.

CURRENT ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY.—DISPOSITIONS AND FORMATIONS.—SOUL-WORK.—AN AUTHOR'S BOOK.—SOUL LEAVING NO RUINS.—BIRD'S NEST.—ELECTRICITY.—WAKING.—LESSON OF THE ARGUMENT.—NUMBERING AN AUDIENCE.—FURNISHING A HOUSE.—SELECTION OF DRESS.—SECRET FALLACY OF ALL FAILURES IN LIMITING GOD.—THE FORGOTTEN DOCUMENT.—THE WILL UNSIGNED.—THE WINDOWLESS OBSERVATORY.—VIRTUE THAT HAS NO HERE-AFTER.—BIAS OF TEMPERAMENT.—OBLIGATIONS TO THE WORLD.—TRANSIENT TRAITS OF CHILDHOOD.—IMPRACTICABLE FAITH.—THE SPIRITUAL EGOTIST.—THE SACRED HYPOCHONDRIAC.—A FIDGETY TRAVELER.—THE DEVOTES DRONE.—A SEXTON AT HOME.—THE MISANTHROPICAL CYNIC.—THE RELIGIOUS MERCENARY.—IRRELIGION A FALLACIOUS RELIGION AFTER ALL.—THE DESERT SAND.—THE PAINTED FIRE.—THE PAINTING COLD.—THE MEAN INDEPENDENT.—THE FASTIDIOUS EXQUISITE.—THE SYCOPHANT SOUL.—A HEARTLESS BOY.—CONCLUSION.

**I**T is a strenuous plea for immortality, that character is itself a process, a formation, left unfinished in the mortal change, which we call death. Characters are always exhibited here as tendencies. They are well called dispositions.

If you are to believe that coals and crystals, in their earth beds, have spent ages in their shaping, you can not believe that thinking minds vanish in whiffs of nothingness, just when they drop their fleshly implements, and fade from the grasp of sense.

This argument may be legitimate. Death does not find the spirit ready to die, as if it had passed its matur-

ity. The spirit knows itself immature, still formative, in exquisite, exhaustless tendency to form.

It would be hard to believe that insects' work, slowly fortifying a coral reef on the sea floor, or mechanics' work blocking a granite or a marble wall, has further reach than soul work, secreting its moral deposits.

It is equally absurd to talk of an author's book out-living him. There are his treatises, in many volumes, on the shelves. Take them altogether, these are his thoughts, and the thoughts of no other man. Can we suppose that his mind, which struggled through these themes, and flung these thoughts by the wayside, as an engine struggling through the resisting atmosphere spreads its sparks, is blotted out of being, because it passes out of sight?

The argument proceeds:

You can take a dead leaf, or a dead log, or a dead body, and trace its dissolution. You can burn it; then science will tell you how much gas was given to the air, how much earthy matter to the sod. The soul leaves no ruins and no ashes. Death is not, therefore, the soul's decay, but the soul's departure.

You come to an empty bird's nest, and pick up the down that clings to it, or a stray plume that dropped, but, finding no other trace of the birdling, you say, it has flown away. And you come to an empty child's cradle, or a household tree, that stands grim and bare



now, or shudders and moans in the breeze; and you say, That bird has learned to fly; it vanished from its nest, just as it was plumed of wing and clear of note.

Or else you say, The soul was in the body, as electricity was in the cloud, or as magnetism in the ore, or as heat and light are in organisms. And when these pass, they pass from one body to another. Electricity never dies; magnetism never dies; heat never dies; light never dies. When I have shut the shutters, and made the room dark, I do not mourn that I have quenched a ray. The sun does not mourn.

You insist that we see no change pass over the human soul from which it can not as well recover; that we have no more right to pronounce it dead in its permanent departure, than dead in its sleep flights, from which it returns every morning, from which it sometimes cries out at midnight; and that therefore the process before it is a road; a road, entering, to be sure, on an eternity which we never have traveled, but a road which, as far as we can follow it, is studded with mile-stones and interpreted by guide-boards, by no means unintelligible.

Such a method of argument has its own forcefulness. It must be plain, however, in the light of it, that a man's substantiation of a future life is the formation of his spiritual nature, and that only such a nature is really forming as fits the capacity of the duration before him.

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When you undertake to number an audience in a hall or a church; or when in a storehouse, you would sum the resources, you first glance over the building itself, to determine its area. When you would furnish a house or an apartment for your own use, you must study the proportions with greater nicety.

It is requisite to scan the scope of eternity whenever you scrutinize its contents of character. Still more accurate must one be who means to pick out for his personal future a fitness and a fullness.

When you select articles of dress, you hold them up from the somber dusk, or the unnatural glare of the wareroom, into that temperate and every-day light, in which they are to be worn. So to select the color and the texture of a principle, one must consider how it will make up, and how it will wear in the scenes which await it.

All failures of religion have their secret in an odd ignorance of the comprehensive nature of God. The religion is schemed, somehow, without him, as if it were meant for some other space than that which he claims and fills. This is often the case where religion seems enthusiastic and even frantic. It gets to be then like the haste of a man who undertakes a long journey, to convey a document of moment to a certain place, by a certain time; and who, after great preparations, and rapid journeys, and sore fatigues, finds that he has left it behind him.

It is like a testator's concern about his will, such as you have often observed. He plans this and that legacy; he utters a fresh codicil; he makes a new will. His life is fretted and wasted, and at last, having finished his designs, he locks up his precious scroll. It is put out of reach; it is pondered and cherished.

- One day he dies, and when the executor opens the drawer of his desk, he suddenly finds that this last will, this final conclusion of purpose and plan, has, by an oversight, been left without signature, and so rendered void.

Some men spend their whole life in building an observatory of the skies—a tower-temple, within which they may find eternal rest, and from which they may look upon eternal glory; but when it is completed, they find that they have forgotten to leave apertures for windows; so that there is no vision of the sky without, no sense and shining from the sky within; and they have only reared, at last, a monastic prison or a sepulchral monument.

Some men make the mistake of accepting the prospect of another world, in a metaphysical or mystic style, as if it did not touch the steps of present conduct; as if devotion were a trance, manipulated beyond the life that now is.

The mistake of others is to insist upon practice, as if it needed no faith; as if the life that now is were detached from that which is to come. The former seem

to suppose that man's breath is not in his nostrils, but aloft in the clouds. The latter, that his breath is in his nostrils for ever and ever. The one class treat his "*soul*" as if he had no feet and no hands. The other treat his hands and his feet as if they belonged to no soul.

A true spiritual life is one which seeks to establish here and hereafter the same relations to God. Failure of religion, whatever be its variations, has this infallible test, that it seeks to procure relations to God hereafter, other than those it cherishes here.

On the one hand, there is a goodness of the Present which has no reference to the God of the Future. There is a virtue, which is of the earth, earthy, the product of physical conformations or circumstantial forces. If it be a sheer shrewdness, a wit sharpened on law, it is in its nature as short-lived as law. If it be a bias of temperament, the soul is drenched in the humors of the system, to shrivel when the body juices dry. Some men are kind because they are dull, as common horses are easily broken to harness. Some are orderly because they are timid, like cattle driven by a boy with a wand. And some are social because they are greedy, like barn-yard fowls that mind each other's clucking. A man whose fatty folds fill him with content, and keep him incessantly smiling, may not be so amiable as the nerve-wrenched sufferer who gulps his passion till it strangles him.

He that ruleth his spirit may be gentler than he that has no spirit to rule.

We do not appreciate what we owe to the world in which we live, in its constitution of our order, and its education of our lives. Rail at it as we may, and blame as we choose the lot of humanity ; it deserves as much credit for our apparent goodness as for our positive evil. It has done as much for us as creatures, in distinction from other possible modes of existence, as America has done for Americans or England for Englishmen, as opposed to the lot and life of Patagonians in Patagonia, or Bushmen in Africa.

There is far more in this world to render a man virtuous than to render him vicious, and it is the only transition state sanitary for sins and self wills like ours. They would revel and rage in the shadows of a hell. They would despair and blaspheme in the blazing radiance of heaven.

Now, a life which is dependent on temporal influence has no grasp, no foot-hold beyond. Mere terrestrial goodness is not celestial life. There are certain traits endearing in infancy which drop from the growing child as the calix drops from the blossom. The child loses its pretty prattle for which its childhood was praised. It no longer practices the tottering step that bewitched us once. Pretty prattle does not become a young man. Tottering steps are not seemly in the prime. In the same way, a sweet character, which

has no faith reach on high, no clasp of God's throne, no more belongs to the soul's further history, stamps no more the soul's further destiny, than beauty of skin or sparkle of eye, or symmetry of shape, or sweet music heard and forgotten, or bright landscapes visited and deserted ;—but when this world dims on the vision, and these ties snap from the heart, honor flakes into void like a bubble on the air ; industry stops like a watch wheel unwound ; goodness evaporates like drying dew ; and charms that accoutred the daily clothing like elegant robes, fade into the night clothes of death, and crumble like grave clothes on the buried form. Such is goodness apart from the Infinite God.

There is just as utter a failure on the other hand, in trying to have a God hereafter who is no God here ; a soul God who is no life God ; a Deity of hope and not of service. This is the single secret of *spurious piety* in all its diversities.

You will meet the *spiritual egotist*. No sorrows are like his. No one else has such especial joys. Hear his high thoughts. Look at his lively feelings. He grows doubts and fears in his garden rarely matched in spirit culture.

Such a truth or such a lesson adapted itself to his state with striking power. But he feels no glow of its broad generic import. It is naught to him as truth for others, as truth for all. Such a terse self-culture is often taken for an eminent devotion, and baptized

"an appropriating faith." But it is only selfishness upon its knees. It "appropriates" the next world to itself, as some men appropriate this, as if there were no neighbors. Many biographies acclaim it as rare godliness, riveting its vision on the glory beyond. But it is cheap vanity, staring into the Bible as some silly face stares on a picture frame or a window, to use the glass as a sly mirror in which it may admire itself.

Such a soul has no large loyalty, no throb of life love. Its fellow souls may trot to their death for all that it heeds. It converses with you as if you had no soul, and there were none but itself. It praises not the hand that blesses, but the blessing that is handed. It hopes not for the glory to come, but for a nook in the safety. Heaven is to be its own happiness, enlarged and exalted, with angels to circle about it, and a God to wait upon it, and a Christ to keep the gate. Heaven means the state where it shall never know want or trouble. And that is the whole of it. Such a man would jostle you away from the entrance to get in himself, and make a merit of having so done. He would as lief have the Almighty resign the throne, if his own interests would not be imperiled or impaired. He will stand and praise Christ, if that is the rule of his happiness, if that is the tax or the task of life everlasting. Otherwise he would not care if Christ had lain in the grave to this very hour. He is eager for the kingdom to come, not when he thinks that a Redeemer's

cross is to be exchanged for a crown, but only when he reminds himself that there is to be a crown put into his own hand. Let him have a happy death, and get snugly between the coverlids of celestial repose, and he cares neither a moment of study nor a whiff of prayer whether the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, or what they become. If a tear is forced to start on his cheek, he wipes it openly, and says: See there, that was my tear; did you hear me? I had a groan. And if he should make his appearance in the choir above, he would interrupt the chorus to ask whether his voice were in tune, or whether his harp did not vibrate a peculiar tone. It has been by substituting this self-concentration for self-consecration, that the church has often made men worse for their so-called conversion, the meaner for their hopes, the harder for their repentance that needed to be repented of, adding to itself daily, not of such as should be saved, but of such as continue slinks and slovens and slaves after all. We have analogied the self-possession and the pleasure of Christian life, to the repose of the child in its home. But to pronounce as piety this inordinate self-love, is to make child-life consist in enormous gluttony or fretful self-will.

Another specimen of failure in the lack of relation to God as he is, is the *sacred hypochondriac*.

He is too humble to be hopeful, too solemn to be thankful, too meek to be holy. If he undertake to



shout for joy, his spirit dies away as the wind dies out of an organ. A whine is not readily set to a psalm. All the stern texts are superscribed with his name, and all the intricate passages are traps set to catch him. The rest are beyond his reach. He is like some fidgety traveler with whom you have journeyed. At every turn of doctrinal highway he gives a petty shriek, "We shall surely be upset." At every heavy pull of duty he groans, "We shall never get through." The least jolt of trial jerks him into spasms and jars his twitching nerves to express the very article of death. He does what he can to dismay his fellow travelers, and by implication to upbraid the way of everlasting life and its conductor.

A failure that seems on the outside the very reverse of the two former, and yet has for its secret the very same fallacy, is that of the *devotee drone*.

The thought seems to be engrossed with religious activity and absorbed in sacred delight. Every observance is lovely. Every little occurrence is an unusual providence. Every sermon is better and better. Every meeting is still more delightful. This is now a rare occasion! Surely we never heard any thing like that! It is impressed upon the mind that something is about to happen! The household of faith becomes the homestead for all inanities and frivolities and brisk bustlings. Home is abandoned for the house of God. The soul has gone to reside in the sanctuary, and needs

no longer a closet. It would transform the temple itself, into closet, and sitting room and kitchen. When you talk with such an one you have the same feeling that has overtaken you when you have found in some old-fashioned church, in a by street, the sexton keeping apartments in the basement, or somewhere within the sanctuary walls. You have said to yourself, This household is scantily accommodated, and God's house is degraded. So it would be, that if there were many characters like this, the church would scarcely have worshipping members, but it would be over crowded with sedulous sextons. Such a person is too religious ever to be holy, too devotional ever to be devout, and too active ever to be serviceable. The character is replete with sacred impressions. But it knows no more of sanctity than does the Town Hall of the eloquence with which its walls nightly resound.

Then there is the *misanthropical cynic*, to whom the church is always a ruin, and the world is always a waste of sand in which the ruin stands, and the sand is rapidly covering the prostrate columns of the good old time. He himself—ah, he is the owl that sits on the stones. He is content enough with his own state. But with every other he is perplexed and pained. He mourns the foibles of saints. He dreads the escape of sinners. He distrusts rapid accessions to the visible church, and parleys of self-deception. But if there be any slacking, he is disgusted with our low estate. Ac-

according to him, in the good old times additions were made every moment, and at the same time no addition was suffered but with the utmost precaution. "This age" is ever a degenerate age. And he insists on being a patriarch at least in this respect, that he "vexes his righteous soul" like "Lot"—like him in little besides. He thinks he is charged with the awe of God's majesty. But he is tumid with his own spleeny pride. He thinks himself almost the only sure heir of Paradise now left below. Any other soul will reach it sooner.

Quite another phase of this fallacy marks the *religious mercenary*. He essays to be a heavenly broker and speculate in celestial stocks. He turns out to be a sharper soul and a pitiful bankrupt. His delusion is to trade in the "clear gold like unto transparent glass," as if it were among the lighter investments.

He means, to be sure, to win the pearl of great price. But he means to drive the best bargain he can. If you can show him that such a pursuit or such an indulgence involves a final forfeiture, he will abandon it, as a prudent man. If religious duty insists on his money or his time, you can dun him and get it out of him, rather than that he will go to law with his Maker. But he will scan the bill and plead for a discount. The church must look after him sharply, for he is not to be entrapped into one work or one prayer too many. He has a sovereign contempt for your overdone piety.

And as to the questions and the crises in the affairs of the church, he is non-committal, while he may be, and otherwise, is, shrewd. If he can only make the most of this world, and be in time for the opening doors of glory, you are welcome to all the watch and the work, all the growth and the gladness. If he must die, he would secure the death of the righteous. But he wishes he could live always. He chooses discreetly between heaven and hell; but he wishes, in the depths of his heart, not only that there were no hell, but that there were no heaven either. Thousands of this class are reckoned as Christians.

There is the same fallacy in that style of *irreligion*, which is only a hesitant and flexile fear of God, standing outside the area of Christian life. It explains the failure of many who are ever "thoughtful" and ever religiously inclined, but make no pretensions to regenerate nature. They plant in vain who plant in desert sands, because there is no fibrous soil. But there is the same reason why nothing grows there of its own accord. The desert sand is dry of life. A painted picture of fire gives no more warmth than a paintless panel. But it gives just as much. And a cold, hard, ingrate heart is none the warmer that it blushes not to seeming warmth. The cold that tinges certain faces with a mock radiance of red, as if they were burning when they freeze, gives no more comfort, stirs no more health, when it sallows others to a sickly blue.

There is the *mean independent*. He is not afraid to die, and he has life enough to live. He has a sacred element in his constitution, as he has a musical element. He cultivates a taste for the one as well as for the other. He likes well enough to go to church; he prizes an eloquent preacher; he patronizes an elegant worship; he pets sacred institutions. But you must not run the thing into the ground. There is a gloom upon him indescribable when the truth becomes too direct, or the scene too intense, which makes his spirit yawn, as an over-heated room will make you drowsy. Such an one often takes great pride in his independence and his courtesy, as traits of this life. He thinks he would disdain a meanness. He would not take a trifle at your hands, without pouring thanks profusely on them. He would not sleep upon a kindness unreturned. Yet he steals God's fresh air; he filches from God's granary; he paces these avenues, and stretches on these swards of Time, as if they were enclosed to him with a Divine receipt. He thinks not to ask; he thinks to take. He is too proud to let his Maker employ him; he is not too proud to let his Maker keep him.

And yet there is a dim religion in his breast, a hope in the God of his Hereafter, whom he will not have as the God of his Here. It is not more religion that he needs. He needs, first of all, to get rid of this figment before he can get life fact. Thou hast a hale and lusty body, hast thou?—what need of holy life to

thee? Thou hast a mind that can reason, and a heart that can joy; thou hast a sweet home, its ties interlaced by dexterous netting, such as fairest hand of angel could not fashion; thy name is esteemed of men; thy gains are ever gaining. God!—what is God to thee? Give up God! But no! God for the dark day! God for the need hour! God? Yes; *God in his turn—God in good time!* He, too, will come into play. But now, every man for himself, and God for us all!

This is a Life Failure.

The same fallacy constitutes the *fastidious spiritual exquisite*. His trouble is that his Christian ideal is so noble. It is so lofty that he can not attempt to reach it. He has such a conception of hereafter godliness, that he must be godless here. He never will dare to begin until he has finished. Better, he thinks, to lounge in the plain than to faint in the mountain pass. Better to flee from the field than to die in the trenches. A false maxim that, countenanced by too many pulpits. As a miser shivers and starves in his bleak garret, because his gold is so precious; as one, terror-smitten, clings to a burning wreck, lest the life-boat should founder; as the novel-porer shuns the needs of humanity, and the spectacles of positive opportunity, because his whole heart is wrought to unearthly heroics, so does this fastidious soul refuse the grace of life below, because there is such surpassing glory on high.

There is another phantasy of subterfuge that marks the *sycophant soul*. He relies upon coaxing his God by-and-by, as if he could cajole him now. The Lord is so good!—the Lord is so loving!

You have seen a rude boy, heartless in his greed, and reckless in his mischief, who boasts to his comrades of the credulity, the indulgence of his father; that he lets him go out at night, and trusts him with money, thinking that all is well;—a boy who abuses the tenderness and patience of his mother, because she will not cast him off, with all his treacheries and all his indecent outbursts. Such a boast, of such a boy, such a heartless fondling, is the religion which lingers in many a soul, to degrade, defile, and destroy it.

There is a liberal praise of the Almighty name, which is the direst meanness under the sun—a blacker blasphemy than the oath of the streets; and the craven heart that would be shivered to atoms by his frown, counts it a bravery to weary his smile; the life that would shriek at his stamp, laughs at his call; the life that would crouch at his thunder and pray in his lightning, buffoons in his sunshine, and mocks at his sapphire blue of all peace, and all patience.

All this is a fallacy of spirit—a failure of life, needing first, not to find a religion which it lacks, but to relinquish a religion which it has.

The obstruction of vitality in the human soul is not

a void. It is a fungous growth. The cancer must be eaten out, if you would regenerate the life.

True faith enters man's breast, and can be seen to enter, only so far and so fast as it is driving the false faith before it. Its law—its lesson is—Let your Here Life give itself up to your Hereafter God.



## CHAPTER III.

### DEATH IN LIFE AND LIFE IN DEATH.

DEAD TREE.—CIVIL DEATH.—DEAD CHILD.—A FADING TO GOD AND A FADING GOD.—SEVERANCE FROM OTHER CREATURES.—THE FLOWER PLUCKED.—THE SHORE TO FISH.—DEAD GODS OF PAGANS.—MOHAMMED.—THE CRUCIFIX.—DEAD ORTHODOXY.—DEAD EXPERIENCE.—DEAD DUTY AND CHARITY.—DEAD MINISTRY.—DEAD LIBERALISM.—DEAD ISLAND.—DEAD SKY.—DYING TOWNS.—LIFE PROGRESS.—THE DISAPPEARING FRIEND WATCHED AND WATCHING.—THE CREATOR'S VIEW.—ALL HIS ARE ALIVE.

WE have seen that he alone can claim a deathless life whose life motives outreach the ranges of a mortal lot. Is there then any perishing from the Maker's sight? Can any creature die to his Creator? In the realm of nature, over which man is invested with high priesthood as the representative of God, you may see illustrated a death in which existence has not terminated. A tree is dead to your eye, not by passing out of your sight or beyond your reach, but by ceasing to exhibit the properties which living trees exhibit—the foliage, the sap, the fruit, the freshening beauty and stately strength. In the same way a man may be dead in the eyes of the law who has no legal recognition, no acknowledged rights and duties, or politically dead who transfers his allegiance to a foreign power. The death of your child lies before you. In what sense is it dead?

Why do you turn away distracted from that death beauty? For the reason that there is no child to you there. It is not your child, and it would not be if another soul were to take possession of the same form. There is no tone of child-love. There is no glance of blood to blood, to kindle the tie. So a man may cease to be a man to his Maker; a soul can die to its God. The alienation must be mutual. On the one hand the spirit ceases to recognize him. The Divine Presence is receding. Glory becomes impalpable and dim, God-head impersonal, unreal. At the same time, the creature changes in the sight of the Creator, and dies to his view even here,—as a leaf dies in your sight, still fluttering on the tree. When the human heart ceases to be a willing subject and a loving child of God, it does not perish from existence, but it does perish from recognition. Certainly God can not recognize as a child, one who is a foe. The Almighty holds the Spirit still. It lies within his territory of providential purpose, of infinite arrangement, and of universal law, as the dead tree stands on your acre, as the dead form is stretched passively before you! But there flashes no glance from the dead eye; there breathes no murmur from the cadaverous lip of such a heart. God hails no responsive life. The man dies to him and he dies to the man.

Imagine this a Godless world. Find a Godless home in this world. Pause in a Godless moment. In this you see the import of spiritual death and trace in its

development a death eternal. There are spirits to whom the Almighty seems to be waning every day. He looks not so almighty, so glorious in holiness as he did awhile ago. He looks wan, like the sun in a watery sky. The personal knowledge of a personal God is a thing of the Past to their thought, or only a thing of the Possible Future. Philosophy is vital. Poetry is ardent. Morality is busy. Beauty is fresh and glowing, but Divine Glory is cold and stark. God Almighty dies. Often when this stage is reached, there ensues a momentary sense of liberty and equality, there is drawn a long breath of relief, and the memory or the ideality of a departing sovereignty is very dear to those who had said to the actual personality, Depart from us. Subjects will praise a dead monarch, who rebelled against his laws. You may make music on a a tombstone when you made dissonance in the life. And the human heart may cherish the image of a dying God, admiring his tracery upon the sky, his works upon the earth, lingering in prostrate adoration before the imprint of his name in nature, rejoicing in the administration of his estate, exulting in the lavish legacies which he has left to man, chanting his requiem in complacent worship, and so erecting altars to the unknown God, while it despises him if he come to claim its duty or to test its love. Such existence is severed from the harmony of the Universe, like a lost star wandering from its sun, and so alien from the host

of heaven. The soul can be dislodged from home in God's domain. The tiniest flower lives and grows when rooted in the soil. By its slender filaments it is in union with the garden bed, with the garden, with the globe. Pluck its stalk, it is still a thing, but a dead thing in its rootless severance. So is a soul lifeless to the Universe when it is sundered from its loyal place before the Universal King.

You may have noticed a school of fish playing close to the shore, till suddenly, when the shallows perplexed and frightened them, they turned as by one impulse and glided swiftly out into the depths. That was the thought of death to them. What to us is solid bank, is to them a mist, a void, a breathless nothingness, and chasmal end.

So to those who live an earthly and sensuous life, God's beach of all Immensity; God's bank of everlasting truth, is but the touch of doom,—the article of death. They know no God there. They flee shuddering away, and die at last.

There is more death on this side the grave than on the other. The world is full of dead religions. Pagans confess it. Brahm is dead; Budh is dead; Jupiter dethroned Saturn—Jupiter has long since been dethroned. Their very tones of worship are wild wails. Like the old priests of Baal, they lash and gash their frames. Perhaps he is asleep or gone on a journey. The worship of the nations is the funeral

cereemony of their gods. They lay garlands on their graves. They chant formulas of incantation to their shades.

Mohammed is already a myth, or at most a memory to his followers. They cherish a mere philosophy of Islamism. The Jewish synagogues chatter and wail like mourning minstrels hired for the service.

The ivory crucifix reads to most of its votaries, —Sacred to the memory of the deceased Christ.

It is the church and the priesthood which are reckoned alive, as administrators of his vast estate.

There is a dead Protestantism, a dead orthodoxy as well, which keeps its dogmas ranged in syllogistic rows, and stamped with shibboleth labels, holding fast the form of sound words, and nothing but the form, pinched or pressed, till it is stifled into lifelessness, as some cabinet of natural history holds its withered specimens by pins stuck through their carcasses, or its stuffed birds, glass-eyed, on pedestals.

There is a dead experience which queries of itself all the time, Did I once trust in God, or did I not? I hope I did; then, very well, then I am safe. But, no, I fear I never did; then let me turn my back on the skies. It is all one in the former case, as when a man looks to see whether he put so much money in a purse, but heeds not what he may have taken out; in the other, as when frightened misers hide their gold where they themselves can never find it. Some men

have laid up their treasure so dexterously in the heavens that their hearts can never get at it.

There is a dead duty which says, "If this thing must be done, it must;" and goes in the harness of necessity like a pack-horse, and abides in the field of its station only because there are fences around it. There is a dead charity which does no fellow creature much harm, being too indolent to do any fellow creature much good. There is a dead hope, which says, "Let me get into the most favorable circumstances to be saved if there may be any salvation," and hopes that the revelation may come true, and that if this world is to fade out, another will appear.

There is a dead ministry which is always claiming to prove that there may have been a God, from marks of design, and coaxing sciences to give evidence for revelation, and great men to lend it their names, and rich men to lend it their purses; and borrowing the logic of the schools, and the rhetoric of the ancients, and the excitements of the times, to attract men, and bidding in the Lord's name for their attention, and telling them how easy and how cheap all shall be made if they will only go to Heaven, and that Christ did not mean to disturb them by any thing he said. There is a dead liberalism put in the place of a living liberality, which says that it is no matter what you believe, if you only believe it; or what you do, if you only do as you believe. There is a dead church, which sets

up its truth-shops on every corner, and retails the best sermons, and the nicest comforts, as venially as Tetzels ever sold indulgences. There is a dead Christianity, which is buried among all these things, and is urned and monumented with the stone piles of learned treatises, and daubed with the untempered mortar of earthly reasonings. It is as if God were the God of the dead.

The Athenians built their altars to the unknown God. But you may see a temple towering to the skies, inscribed to the memory of a departed Maker. And men make it also a museum. They bring their trifles of form and their curious thoughts, and they lay them there. They pile their crumpled traditions, they heap their crude conjectures, and they call these their religious systems. They are like the pyramids of Egypt, at once the tomb of all their kingly greatness, and the futile toil of all their lives.

But if a dead religion be a faith detached from the life, a life detached from the faith is only a Godless life, and so a death.

Does one talk of commercial life, of political life, of social life?—and then does he fancy that he may have also a religious life? Does he keep the one in the closet, and the other among men? Then both are dead by that one severance. A religion that has nothing to do with political life, with business life, with daily life, is a dead religion, and the earth life that packs and heaps, and mounds it, is its grave.

A life that has no glow of God's smile on it, is like a bloodless body, in itself a death. You have seen a dead island, as it was called, looming sorrowfully in the lake. Round it the waters rippled, and the living creatures played. But the tall trees stood barkless, leafless. The hard flint floor was dry of any wave; not a spear of grass grew on its bosom. Not a living creature seemed to light on its bald brow. The winds whistled death through the dead trees. The waves dashed death on a dead shore. The moon gleamed coldly on a ghostly scene. The landscape mourned the spot as if it lay encoffined. The waters murmured as if they uttered its funeral dirge. It was a death in life. So a soul is sometimes islanded in the very flow and ripple of a boundless flood of glory, barren unto God, and dead. The kingdom of heaven kisses its flinty life with heavenly tides; the summery sheen glistens upon its breast; the wind sweeps over it, to stir it to response, but it is dead—dead to the Almighty. Stone dead, and as if God were no more.

There is a fearful fancy of a lifeless sky, a mechanical enroofing built over nature, not a vital firmament of nature's own expansion. It would be the covering of the finite, not as now it covers itself by mingling with the infinite, but as doubt would cover it, as bigotry would cover it by shutting out the infinite. A dead sky would be a harsh mechanism. In some dull and leaden hour you may have imaged it—



an artificial elegance, a painted, gilded firmament. Let the gorgeous colors which ineffable skill once dashed upon that convex canvas linger there dingily and darkly. Let there be carved rifts of blue, never opening nor closing, but rigid in their mechanism. Let there be white clouds, immovable and unyielding, cut to angular shapes, or measured to mathematic curvature of pattern. Let the blue be beautiful, but capable of no rich and ravishing depths. Let the zenith arch be timbered massively, but non elastic, imprisoning the spirit to its limits here. Let that Hereafter no longer look like folding doors, but look and be an adamantine wall. Then look aloft on this dead sky ; not into it, but upon it. God made it once as a builder does his work, and surrendered it for our dwelling. But God no longer looks upon us through its windows or loops and folds. It ceases to be transparent. No flushes of a life beyond quiver in that empyrean. No flashes of electric import thrill it to nervous waves. It hangs there, a screen, a dismal veil. The fancy of that dead, desolate sky is fearful. And such is a soul life, architected and endowed by his own hand, but void now of his motion and his look. No lustre of his love ripples it to fluent consciousness of him. No touch of his majestic tenderness thrills it to nervous joy. It is Godless. It is dead. Sky as it is, in structure, it is a lifeless sky.

The schemes of this mortality, the vast attempts of

each state for the next, of childhood for youth, of youth for vigorous manhood, of manhood ever for a morrow, are like the towns that spring up on some projected railroad track, in expectation of a swift and sudden fortune. Vast storehouses are erected; giant trades begin. Perhaps the railway comes, and there ensues a brisk bustle and a clamorous confusion, a mimicry of metropolitan existence; the railway touches them, and they get ready to begin to grow;—the railway passes waywardly by, and they languish and they fail. How still and dusk and dry stand then the cumbersome buildings. So there is a life of planning on the earth which waits for eras, for stages of existence that may bring it strength and growth. The young heart is panting for the hurry and the stir. The hurry and the stir have come; it hastens to begin; then they leave it wondering after them as they rave and rattle out of sight.

Is this living? or is this dying?

But in the Divine Kingdom of reconciled wills and regenerate lives, there can be no death. It might be obvious even to us, that what we call death can not be in its experience what it seems to be to those who look on. You watch a friend departing from your door, and every step he takes transforms him upon your sight. Now he lengthens his shadow like a tree; now he shrinks and curls to a point. Anon he expands into visibility again, and his outlines grow distinct as

he shifts his position, as if he had changed his mind and were returning. He disappears behind a hedge, and the hedge seems to move around him, and to close in upon him. Then he clambers to a hill brow and the hill top spreads lower and lower as if subsiding with him. At length he dwindles and is condensed into one point, and that point seems stationary, as if it did not move at all. Then it flickers for a little, and at last goes out as by an explosion of the distance. This is your view. But it is not his experience. That is not the view of one who sees him as he is, whose eyesight bears him company. *To him your house* seems to dance and flicker far away, while he is in his own unbroken consciousness. To him the doorway, where you stand watching, grows blurred, but he is unchanged. To him the landmarks seem to leap out of their places, while he preserves his pace, murmuring at your disappearance as you are sad at his.

So to a departing spirit, the room grows dark, while to you the lovely eyeballs fix and set themselves in straining blindness. The soul is passing from before those window panes where you watched it in your courtings, where you caught its glance, and you say, it has gone out. But to the soul, the shutter has been closed, and *you* seem to have retired from before that window. It glides into another room. The dying asks you dreamily, why you put out the light. You look to see whether the pupils are expanded.

You feel his clammy hand. Your hand feels cold to him. You are dying as you sit and sob. The world is dying to him as it rattles on, but he;—he is alive as much as ever. It is for this reason that eternal truth has such a sovereign supremacy at that crisis hour. If the departing were really changing to themselves as they change on our yearning gaze, Eternity would seem never so impossible, and celestial truth never so unsubstantial and so futile. The article of death itself would inspire that infidelity which now it neutralizes, and would paralyze the soul into that very idiocy of thought from which now it shocks and startles it. But life finds lives beyond, and living creatures everywhere alive to the Living God. Let us stand by the Creator's side as angels stood shuddering to dip their feet even at the shore sedges of a billowy chaos. This creaturehood is everywhere. This universe is transparent. He fixes his eye upon a valley clod, and creatures stir and twine in exquisite delight. He peers into a drop of water, a globule of the atmosphere; it bubbles with the bliss of being; it choruses the voices of a host in one living shout. He lifts his eye upon the outmost space, attenuate, remote, a void, a vacancy to all other visions;—to him the distance splendors nebulously, and the nebulous distance spheres itself in hosts, in worlds. There where you trace a pensive and oblivious waste, they are trooping it full before him in exhilarated exercise, in

approaching praise. No less he looks into the shadowy land, the realm of spectral mist to us, where disembodied spirits dwell, and it is a solid, massive city, the Jerusalem above, and every separate soul in its perfected individuality and its distinct perception comes up before the Living God to speak with him and hear his voice. He glances through the mounded grave; he lifts with a smile the foolish cerements; he notes the crumbling members, ghastly and forlorn, and where you are afraid to look, whence you would persuade even your God to come away and sit and sigh with you, as Mary did of old;—in the grave itself he sees the process of the life to come, the stirring of the incorruptible. Smiling his glory, there he beholds, as once before, “all very good.”

Death! There is no death at all about the Living God. There is to *us* who are in this “*valley*, the *shadow*” of death cast by the intervening hills of our lot, this valley shadow which we call mortality, and which prevails nowhere but in this ravine of Time, sunken and dank beneath the greensward of Eternity.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONTACT AND PERCEPTION.

CONTACT AND PERCEPTION.—POSITIVE FAILURE AND PARTIAL DEFECT DEDUCED.—DEFECTS.—CRUDE CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.—CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND MARTIAL LAW.—CONDITIONAL STRESS.—THE PLANETS.—MACHINE WORK AND SPHERE WORK.—GOD'S VISIT.—THE LIFE-PRESERVER.—INCESSANT DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.—SENSE OF NEED AND VAIN QUEST OF THE SENSE.—THE SHIP WAITING FOR A STORM.—SPURRED STEED.—SLEEPING IN WAIT FOR A BELL.—RELIGIOUS ADVENTURE.—COURTEOUS ADROITNESS.—BOY'S RECKLESS BOATING.—VICIOUS THEOLOGY.—A LIMITATION OF GOD IS A POLYTHEISM.—FAR THOUGHT.—ITS STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE.—ARGUMENTS OF DESIGN ARE ONLY HILLS.—THROB OF HEART LOVE.—AN ESSENTIAL HOLINESS.—EFFECT ON CREED.—PRACTICAL POWER.—"BEYOND, AND STILL BEYOND."—TRAVELED THOUGHT.—ABOLITION OF DEATH.—THE SHORE TO FISH.—IDENTITY OF SPACE.—CHARM OF FAR THOUGHT.

**T**OTAL failure of spiritual life is the soul's ignorance of its relations to God. Partial failure is a defect in its perception of these. There is this one secret of a faulty faith, in manifold shapes, as there was one clue to manifold delusions.

There is a near-sighted religion, which treats with God only as he approaches in particular manifestations. It differs from a spurious religion, in this, that there is an established relation between its life here and its destiny hereafter. It comes short in the reach of the harmony of that relation. One form of this near sight, is a *crude conscientiousness*. Conscience keeping is not

of necessity full life, because the conscience reach may be restricted. We do not speak here of what the world calls morality. That, as has been seen, may be void of *any* reference to God. But there is a *sacred* morality, which yet is limited in its range. It is a conscience towards God, but it encounters Him only now and then, only here and there. It is neither an actual piety nor an adequate morality. True conscientiousness is an obedience to the civil government within the soul, with reference to the infinite government which is over the soul, just as you obey the municipal functions at hand, because you love your whole country. But there is a great deal of suppressed riot which calls itself peace, an insurrection surrounded and quelled. Much that is termed religion is under *martial* law rather than *civil order*. It is a fear of God, but it is not *the* fear of God. It is the fear which a culprit has, because there is an officer at hand ; not the fear which the steward has, lest his master be robbed.

Another style of near-sighted religion may be termed *conditional stress*. It yields to the thought of Divine interference, and stands, for the rest, Godless, as a sign-board sways and swings in the wind, but is not alive in the atmosphere. To be affected at the thought of his approach, is not to float in the flood of his truth.

The planets have a piety of their own, in their placid obedience to the Divine Law of attraction. If the Maker were to govern the planets as some men require

to be moved, it would be by an incessant interference. Now he would stir Herschell on his course, and now he would hold Saturn steadily to his orbit. Now he would shake his rod at the sun to keep him shining, and now he must be hurling the moon back to her limits.

But men were made to be brought within the harmony of his effluent love, as the heavenly bodies keep his laws in the distance. To reach God the soul must let his far glory reach it, looking into his zenith and kneeling beneath his outmost and absolute will.

The religion of some is a machine work, that must be wound up at brief intervals, and sometimes stopped for repairs.

Love life of soul is sphere work, that rolls through space, without waste or wear.

Sometimes, in the house, you hear it announced, Such an one is coming. A visitor of distinction; perhaps, of exaction and dread, or perhaps of pleasure. You make haste to get ready. You throw off your shabby attire. You jostle on something more seemly. You are eager and alert. But presently word is sent up, It is not he, or He is not coming after all. He has crossed the street and turned up another way. At once, your preparations change. Your expectation droops like a flag when the wind lulls.

So some minds are stirred at the cry of God's name, as if he were to be reckoned for an occasional visitor.



Their regard is not wholly insincere. But it is limited to the occasions of rare suggestion or stirring appeal. In particular blessing, they are thankful. In peculiar need, they are prayerful. In startling peril, they are trustful. In revival, they are awake. Either the memory or the hope of these will move them. But they are alive only in gushes of grace, or in gusts of providence.

A man puts on a life-preserver in the billows, and so some souls put on faith. But there is many a one who no more thinks of carrying faith into his counting-house, than of wearing a life-preserver in his parlor.

One need not wait until he die, to have a death-bed repentance. I may have nothing but a death-bed repentance, a death-bed religion to day, in perfect health, and live upon it for twenty years to come. Many sermons and hymns and good books may countenance me in this. I may fear God, and try to serve him, and even try to love him, because I must die *one of these* days, just in the same tone, as if I knew I *must die this* day.

It is not to be denied that these solemn contacts of truth have a legitimate power, in their turn. A sense of need or of peril sometimes drives a spirit to God's love, as a storm drives a ship into port.

But to *live* by such a sense,—to *wait* for it, is a patent and palpable folly. Here is a ship lying plaintively at anchor, or loosely drifting, as if she sought no harbor.

As you pass her on the sea, you cry, Ahoy, there! What is the matter on board? Are you waiting for a cargo? No, is signaled back. What then? a crew? No, again. Your orders? *No*. What *then*? We wait a genuine storm. We need a true sense of hurricane to drive us home without tacking, and make our sails to flap all the while as if they were being torn away.

So some men are waiting, to serve their God, until they shall attain that paradoxical complacency, a *self-righteous sense of sin*.

The same temper depends on the spur of duty for its speed; like a steed that knows how much goading he is apt to have in the mile, and fits his trot accordingly.

There are sleepers who have so long been in the habit of depending on a bell or an alarm clock to rouse them, that if they chance to wake spontaneously at the normal time, or if, refreshed by an especial placidity of sleep, they wake a little earlier than usual, they make a conscience of going to sleep again, because they have not been stirred up in the essential, habitual way. So there are souls, that await a certain stress of conscience, and a certain intimation of appeal, a pungency or pathos, to disturb their willful sloth; and if these are not at hand, they turn over again, on their very conscience, to repose, and complain to the ministry, or to the church, or to the

means and times on which they have relied—saying lugubriously, Why did you let us sleep so long? We heard one bell; we waited for another.

Religion becomes to many an adventure. The adventurer meets the exigency, and then looks no further. Let my undertaking pass this crisis, is his plea. It startles all his energies. The moment it is past, his nerves relax in apathy. He lives, as we say, "by his wits;" that is by sparks of suggestion that are struck on the flint of dire necessity.

Many a man thinks that he has learned the track of life eternal, when he can step adroitly and gracefully on one side, to let the angels of God pass, giving them the inside of the walk politely, as they meet him one by one and fain would accost him. He mistakes this zigzagging courtesy of rare occasion for celestial recognition on the homeward path.

Some venturesome boys launch a boat from the beach. They know nothing of navigation. But they undertake to provide for contingencies. They rock and tilt the boat till it ships an uncomfortable amount of water. But they bail that out. Then they run on a rock, and hang there until with much tugging they get off again. By this time there is a leak; that they cork as best they can. They get into a current, but they are somehow whirled out of its peril, and glide on more steadily. So they find their boat getting into darker water, and making out to sea, as if it were a

a living creature, intent to carry them among the monster billows. It may be they shall be swamped and drowned. But they indulge a hope that if their boat should be swamped, they may not be drowned; they may be picked up. Let us suppose that they are rescued by a schooner that passes opportunely, and are taken safely into port somewhere. It was an adventure, after all. It was not a navigation. There are many such silly younglings of Time playing in the strand. And much religion in its ventures looks no farther. Full faith can calculate its longitude and latitude in the rolling swells of space, by the meridian of the everlasting throne.

All limitations of God's ways and warpings of God's truth, arise from some defect in the vision of the soul, and induce a defective habit of the soul's life, a perverted character. Vicious theology may induce vicious principles of life, but these in their turn generate a falser creed, as grandchildren often reproduce along with the traits of parents, the countenances of grandparents.

Now it is as vital to consider God's reach of remote glory, as it is to recognize his nighness and his touch.

If we detach from our perception those conceptions of him which outreach our own personal relations to him—if we apprehend him simply in those relative attitudes and by those relative emotions which our experience suggests, it will not only turn out that each

one has a different God from that which his neighbor has, but that each one has a different God in his conception of Divinity, at different epochs of his own life. And so it often occurs that one decade of a man's life is spent in religious enthusiasm, and another in a bald blank, which he is afraid to call skepticism ; and another, still, in the revival of early perceptions, or the dwarf growth of a third religion, as very aged people sometimes get new sight and hearing like their first. Oftener it ensues, that the religion is varied by the circumstances of his life, such as the books he reads, or the associations he forms, or his trials and temptings. But all those who recognize God by experience alone, practice, somehow, a subtle polytheism. They are making gods to themselves unconsciously. There may be a polytheism among Christians as enormous as ever there has been among Pagans. If one experience can define you Deity, another can transform him.

Full Faith discriminates itself, as a Far Thought, and not a Near Sight. First of all *in its statement of doctrine*, the being of God is an *à priori* idea. His nature is an axiom to it. His name is never built on an argument of design. Arguments of design, and evidences of religion, are to true faith, what hills are to true sight of the zenith. One goes up to the summit to get a good view, and delights to scan the hill-side, the earth buttress, from its peak pinnacle,

that no longer seems to sustain the sky, but to adore it, down to its rocky floorings and chasms of seeming breakage, that after all are seams and selvedges of firmer fastening, and mysteries that exhibit the imbedded work. But a man might as well go up a hill top to prove the being of a sky, as up a mound of logical establishment, and culminating evidence, to prove a God. And, if you ask how then such a faith can be originated, the answer is,—only by the sovereign, firmamental look of God's own glory on the soul,—which may first seize it on a mountain brow, or may enfold it on the plain; but once seen will not be disputed or forgotten, wherever it is. Next in its *throb of heart love*, full faith integrates itself, as distinctly; loving the God of Heaven as much as the God of Earth; the God of the Future as much as the God of the Present; the crown of Christ as much as the cross of Christ. It loves him as much for what he is as for what he does. Rather, it loves what he does, on account of what he is. In its life-tenor, then, it is an essential holiness, although it be but a germ of holiness struggling with the sods around it, to peep from them, and pierce through them,—not a flower in bloom. Holiness is thus discriminated from the morality which is Godless service, and from the defective religion which is eye-service to God. It is the activity of Far Thought, and subscribes itself his who sits upon the throne, as much as his who steps upon the

earth. It will therefore evangelize a man's religion, to know that his Sovereign is not disclosed in any one scope of his ways, in any one system of his works. If this knowledge shall at the same time abrogate and annul much that he has thought to be his creed, it will only cauterize his intellectual impertinence, as the nitrate of silver touching a membrane obliterates only its unhealthy excrescence. Systems of theology which attempt to piece out God's doings, and parcel out his purposes, are sheer finite insolences. That higher, heavy-browed study which ponders on his sovereign scope, is not a system, so much as it is a reverence, an anthem.

The Creation, in its furtherest extent, and in its minutest atom, has not inventoried the resources of the Creator. The plan of Redemption has not tested nor told all that the Almighty can do. The atonement of Christ itself, is not the gasp of the Godhead. The next dispensation, unveiled as it is, in its aeons of aeons, and therefore shoreless sea to us, drops no horizon on the ken of the Infinite. Yonder, beyond, God is. Where He is, He acts. Where He acts, He reigns. Such is the Far Thought of Faith. And it is of the utmost practical efficiency. It is the electric fluid of spiritual life, nerving it on the earth, and knitting it to the sky, in a sympathy that knows no obstacle of distance. Rendering motive pure, it renders character real. Rendering spirituality independent of cir-

cumstance, it renders it perennial. It will disperse all hypocrisy, and dissolve all partiality. It exempts from the philosophic foolery of demurring to God as he is. It will release from the theologic foolery of reasoning about him as he is not known. You say, as the sum at once of philosophy and theology, Lo! these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him! but the thunder of his power who can understand? Says the thought, I am environed and invested. I stand within this inclosure of mortality, the shadow nucleus of a sinful humanity. Around that, and on the outside of that, is the engirdling zone of law, natural and moral, which I can not pierce. It incloses me, and yields not. But beyond that, is the concentric ring, the mystic encircling of God's revealed mercy, raying into it, athwart it, over it, and piercing to every creature, penetrating even my tiny life, thrilling the cold core of my being. Beyond that, beyond, and still beyond, is the hidden purpose of God,—his omniscient will, hemming in, and outmeasuring his published gospel—still radiant over it, and concentric with it;—guarding the circle of its truth, and opening the space for it, marring it with no infraction and no collision. Beyond *that*, ah! beyond, and *still* beyond, is God's *essence*, boundless like illimitable space, and the planets of that power, and the luster of that glory, inclose all the rest, gently, safely, everlastingly. It is light inaccessible and full of glory.



He is God over all, blessed for ever. But here is the center, not there. God in Christ as he is revealed, is not all there is of God. It is God centered here, the same center for my weak, eccentric soul that would tremble to leap its orbit and fall, as for the stateliest seraph poised on high.

Now this range of faith is comfort. It is what we call salvation. It is what Jesus calls *Rest*. It is the sublime repose in God's sublimity of Distance. Aye, says the soul, this is his work, but this is only part. This he does, but he is doing something else. This is the unfinished work. This is the shadow.

What we call religious experience is a little part of our real religion. Lightning that sheets and forks, is, as we phrase it, fearfully near. But afar, the stars shine pure, unflecked and tranquil.

The far thought of faith affects the practical purposes and the present claims of life, as far travel educates a man for life at home. He is not fitted in these days for the most rustic retirement, in its opportunities or its obligations, its duties or its recreations, who has not taken note of distant lands, in some way of information, at the least. He must expand his thought range among men and things. But *he is best* furnished for a life at home who has been *himself* abroad. The true faith thought has traveled far, can travel freely within the territories of God. Where the mountain's brow pierces the clouds, we know it still. Where the

wave rolls under the horizon, we know it crests again. We have learned what sunset means, and fear not that the sun is gone out because it has gone down. We see a soul bark passing out of view, but we know that there are other shores and brighter shores than these. And so there spreads before us a lofty vision of the identity of Space.

Far Thought awakens joy in this—that the Divine ubiquity is the security of every soul that trusts in God. It interprets Christ's words as we are not apt to understand them. In my Father's house are many mansions. It makes us live a wider, loftier, vaster thoughted life, and that shall be a lowlier and a meeker life. It bids us live nearer to God on earth, and that will bring us nearer to God on high. It bids us live here in his closet;—then will we be living high, beside the throne. It bids us get low in the dust. Then will we get aloft among the stars. It bids us trust and love and serve that God, as he dwells in light inaccessible and full of glory. So shall we be at home with God for ever, and find His house our home. By the same vastness of reach, the same versatility of range, we will be brought into sympathy with departments of his kingdom and diversities of spiritual life, which had been as though they were not.

## CHAPTER V.

### ESSENTIAL TONE.

POWER OF TONE.—RING OF COIN.—TEST TONES.—CULTURE OF EAR.—THE INFINITE HEARER.—TONE OF CREEDS.—RIGHT IN SPITE OF ERROR.—DEPUTE.—IN THE WAY, OR CONCERNING THE WAY.—DOCTRINE OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.—OF JUSTIFICATION.—OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY.—ERRORS IN LETTER OR PAGE JUDGED BY TENOR.—FOREIGNERS' BLUNDERS.—SLIGHT FLAW OF TONE SIGNIFICANT.—CHRIST'S EYES IN PORTRAIT.—MODERN SKEPTICS.—RETAINING THE CASK.—PRACTICAL TONES.—DOUBLE ENTENDES OF SOUL.—POPULAR PLEAS TRANSLATED BY GOD.—NO COUNTERFEITING HIS WORK OR HIS TRUTH.—GOD TAKING HINTS.—COMFORT OF THE THOUGHT.—THE LOVER'S HINT FOR THE TIMID SOUL.

THERE is more force in tone than in syllables themselves, to convey delicate and interior meanings. Voice tone is like the ring of coin. The coin face shall wear the same medallion expression—the superscription shall be the same, but only by its ringing shall you be able to test its metal.

Life in its subtler spiritualisms is tested by tones. There is a tremor which betrays the braggart, the blusterer, while he is swaggering in the face of danger. There is a tone of art and enforced feebleness in much that passes for hilarity or for facetiousness. We often catch the cadence of envy in brisk congratulations. There is a sibilance of bitterness audible in much courtesy. Sometimes the flat, toneless sound of

much apparent vehemence, tells the fracture of all vibrant earnestness, sounding the dead sound of a hollow drum, the shallow sound of a shattered bell.

At other times, the undertone of feeling in a common-place, such as *How do you do?* or *Good bye*, or even *Indeed*, hallows it to an ineffable intensity. There even seems to be a turn and temper in the chirography of some letters, by which we tell whether "*Yours very truly*," or "*Your sincere friend*," means the popular politeness or the personal endearment. Some persons need say little to tell much. Some need to say much to prove the little.

There may be a lingering accent of love in estrangement, and a clasp of kindness in the voice of anger.

Tone is audible to the nice and accurate listener, when it is not distinct to the speaker himself.

An exquisite ear for music tells discords, and is pained by them, when the performers are delighted with themselves. The medical practitioner has trained his hearing to sound the lungs and sound the heart by percussions which other ears could not distinguish.

There is an infinite Hearer. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?

To such a hearer, tone is of more consequence than the fashion of words or the structure of sentences.

This is true, first of all, in reference to the creed utterances of men, or, as we call them, their doctrinal statements. There is a sense in which human ortho-

doxy is of prime moment. And there is a sense in which its consequence is very secondary. We are accustomed to discriminate standard beliefs as they express what is fundamental truth, or what truth is simply incidental. In reference to the latter, an error is a blunder in the way, a dispute along the way. A mistake, of the former is a blunder *as to* the way, a dispute in regard to it. He who is wrong in regard to a road, can not be in the road. So far those who are strenuous for vital truth have good cause to be strenuous. But there is something that may be overlooked even in this view. A man may be wrong in his notional grasp of a vital truth—he may be inadequate, inaccurate, in the didactic statement of it, and still be intoned by its force. It shall have suffused his life, and left him intellectually confused, or even unconscious in regard to it, as the light often mellows and floods clouds, while it is concealed behind them. Take for example the essential fact of the Divine Sovereignty as fashioning itself into purposes, that take up and sway the free agency of men—a truth in itself as essential as that of the being of God. But many by constitution or education have been taught to shudder at the word “decrees.” They look upon these with the same horror, and come to the thought of them with the same loathing which would seize them at the sound of profanity. And yet these hearts, having become humble and trustful, do put

themselves into the care of Divine purposes. Their terrestrial lives look to a Sovereign Providence. Their spiritual lives acknowledge infinite grace. Hear their prayers and praises. The confession,

"O, to grace how great a debtor,"

will be found in an Arminian song, as well as in any Calvinistic prayer.

You must have noticed also Romanists, whose personal faith outran their creed. If you were to debate polemics with them, you might call them votaries of slavish superstition. They would not admit that your doctrine of simple justification by faith could save you. Yet their secret resort is to a Saviour's name, and they no more would trust a priest to give them absolution than would you.

So there is an inability to receive the Godhead of Christ—a bewildered and defeated attempt to study out the personality of God, and therefore a denial of it, as a pupil that has studied out a sum too hard for him, always says, There is no answer; or,—the book is wrong. That is a foolish speech of foolish and jejune impatience. Yet many such a soul is wrongly found in a sect of sheer, bald rationalism—a blank, negative creed, a fine-spun, æsthetic, semi-toned religion, which adopts this for its maxim doctrine: Nothing is but what we can measure. We shall not suffer God himself to tell us what we can not

understand. But although you find such a person there, his knee is bent to the very mystery of God in Christ, and his heart throbs with love to his Divinity. And the *tone* of that worship is a tone of truth. The Almighty hears what this spirit would say. Its errors are like the errors which you often find in a printed sentence, or in a letter. Sometimes trivial in their form—sometimes vital in their fashion. Yet you can easily correct them. Suppose a word to be left out. It may be an unimportant word, such as a “*the*,” or an “*an*,” the sense of which supplies itself. It may be an important word, such as a “*not*,” or a “*neither*.” It may be a curious and absurd alteration of a word, such as *person* for *reason*, or *same* for *save*; and it makes no sense; but you look over the tenor and the spirit of the whole, and you say, “It is only a blunder; the *tone* tells what he means.”

God overhears the naturalized souls in the kingdom of heaven, that were lately strangers and aliens, trying to talk strait celestial, as you hear foreigners trying to talk good English, and he says within himself,—Yonder soul thinks it asks for food, when it asks for pain. I will give it food. It thinks itself singing a hymn of gospel—it has got the wrong stanza and tune. It thinks it spells Zion, when it only spells Sinai. But the *tone* is right.

Upon the other hand, the same test is as valid when it is inverted. A very little flaw may be the

faulty tone in a scheme or an utterance of doctrine, which tells it to be not only unsound, but unsafe. A leak in a vessel is not of consequence according to its size, but according to its place.

You will hear sermons and read books that are studiously smooth from all error. They may be more accurate in language, more full in didactic statement, more methodized in arrangement, than others; yet there is something lacking. You can not tell what it is. Instinct assures you that all is not as it should be. Not every such supposition is well founded. The fault may be in yourself. For if you are in no personal sympathy with the utterer, but in a personal antagonism, you shall not do him justice. His sweet words shall seem weak words; his strong words shall seem hard words.

But if it prove thus to you, practically the same result is brought about. There is a preaching and praying in the name of Christ which does not justice to his eyes. It is a portrait of his, with the features true, but the eyes twisted, or blurred.

The modern infidelity is just Christianity, with a false tone in it.

The modern atheism has taken the cask of the gospel, labeled as it was, and proceeded to adulterate its contents, and so to deal them out. Men get the milk of the word as many households get their daily milk. There is poured in the diluting fluid of sentiment,



which by itself they would scorn to touch, which they would retch at and reject if it were offered for its own sake. The children would cry and die. Still they pour in and draw out. At first there is a singular taste of the mixture, though there be much of the old staple truth left. You receive it as the same milk. By and by you begin to say, "What is this? If this be the sincere milk of the word, then we know not its flavor." But the children learn to relish it. They swallow it readily, and there is stimulus enough in it to make them thirst again, the while they grow astonishingly thin. And still the writers pour in their diluted thought above, and draw the compound from beneath, and the multitude obtain it—it is the same cask, the sacred cask—and they call it a pulpit, or they call it a theology. But that watery, chalky stuff, is at best but the wash-water in which old gospel terms, like empty cups, have been rinsed.

There is a formal courtesy shown to truth, a studious politeness which by its very hauteur and coldness, and by its patronizing manner, shows its sardonic bitterness, its grim hatred. It is perceptible often in the magazines, and the newspapers, and in many popular books.

But it is in the practical claims of God and Christ that tone tells most of all. There one sees the arch equivocation,—the artifice of sin, or the candor of faith.

There is in moral life what is called double entendre. The words are in themselves pure and true. The evil allusion is remote. It is concealed under a sly and obscure figure. It is capable of offense as a grossness; it is susceptible of defense as a safe remark, and even an elegance. A practiced ear tells what is meant. And it would be safe to say that more harm has been done, more young men have been corrupted, more insults have been offered by the utterance of double entendre in speech, in painting, in statuary, in books, than by all the ribaldry in the streets. You would exorcise from your circle, you would thrust from your parlor, the wretch who should be guilty of it. For he would show not simply a lapse into indelicacy, but a practiced cunning of all vice, a cool and calculating iniquity irreclaimable.

But there are double entendres of the soul in its pleas and sophistries before God, as hateful to him.

Equivocal language of the life is as vile. He hears a spirit speak a truth, a trite, tame truism, and hears in it an undertone of all rebellion. A man may say, "We need not go mad on the subject of religion, we need not cherish an unnatural excitement." This speech is in itself a truth and wisdom. But the meaning is, We will not have our day dreams disturbed. The Infinite Hearer notes the tone. A man may say, There are many within the church who are no better than many without it. That is all true. But what

he says in the ear of God is, I shall have this pretext wherewithal to shirk thy summons, and to shred away thy gracious clasp.

He says in the most tender tone, I do not esteem it wise or well to terrify men. But what he says to God is, Goodness never can win me, and I will not look at a judgment seat. I am not to be frightened. One is saying, "Are there no heathen at home that we must send missionaries abroad?" But God translates it, Am I my brother's keeper? One is saying, I am not satisfied with myself; but his tone says, I am distrustful of Christ." The Almighty God takes hints. He overhears the tones; he will hear nothing else. Two things are impossible: the one to counterfeit any work of God, the other to mimic it. For he has set a value, a private mark of the Infinite, upon the least, the lowliest thing. You can not make a blade of grass sooner than you can make a star. Bring together all the skill artistic, all studious and intricate delicacy of mechanism or of chemistry; let the ripe botanist direct the work; let the painter genius mix his tints; let swiftest, gentlest handicraft ply the thread—Power, and Art, and Patience all combined, can not contrive the single grass blade, nor the least shoot of growth. Nor can the lever of your might, or the skill of your pressure, enhance it to a speedier growing. You must take it in his laws of growth and his processes of culture.

So neither can you counterfeit or imitate any truth. He has stamped his signature, he has printed his label on the least jot and tittle. A man might as well try to palm off on the painter of a picture a spurious copy of his own work.

And this truth which might otherwise seem so stern, is a comfort of comforts to every trembling, honest heart. The Almighty God can take a hint. And a hint is all you dare give. When you have long cherished an earthly love, patiently stretching the arms of longing, that clasped but vacancy, stilling the palpitations of your heart, that only heard their own hot, hard throbs,—you have sought at last a reassuring token—a hint,—you have grown preternaturally keen to interpret it, and noble to prize it, and tender to cherish it. It is not a verbose, a voluminous utterance, that you need. And your love has been returned. The response is delicate in its intensity, secret in its vital tenacity. It suffuses the inner phases of life; it will not bear a rough, hasty grasp. It can not fully express itself. It is tremulous and timid in its vibrant emotion. But it gives you a hint at last—a gentle, unspeakable hint. It is a blush, it is a smile, it is a light, nervous pressure, it is a monosyllable, it is, above all these, a cadence, a tone. That asserts it, and that is its claim on your loyal fidelity and your reposing trust. So there are souls who murmur in their very dreams, that they

can not express their love to Christ. They are faltering in life; they stammer, they sob; their speech is broken; their sentences are imperfect; they are shy of his glory; they are afraid to trust themselves; they are not glad enough or bold enough, they think. But he has watched them long. He knows the cadence of their fluttering thoughts. He knows the dew-drop tear. He knows the gasping breath of prayer. He knows the sob of confession, broken, smothered though it be. He knows the sigh of love. He will hear your prayer that seems to you only a gasp. He will hear what you say in your soul, when your soul lips seem only to part and make no sound. It is not enough that he hears. He hearkens and hears. And the lowliest tone, the softest tone, whispers sweetly, speaks aright. The faintest accent is translated by a Hearing God.

## CHAPTER VI.

### VARIETIES IN UNITY.

VARIETY IN NATURE.—TWO ASPECTS.—FULLNESS IN DIVERSITY.—FOREST SOLITUDE PEOPLING ITSELF.—SINGLE PRINCIPLE.—VARIATION IN TIME.—FAUNA AND FLORA.—HUMAN CHANGES.—IDENTITY.—SPIRITUAL VITALITY SHOWS THE SAME LAW.—NO UNIFORM SEQUENCES.—PERCEPTION OF SIN.—ALARM OF FIRE.—SCENE OF SHIPWRECK.—DIFFERENT APPROACH OF TRUTHS.—TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE, LIKE A COLORED MAP OF A COUNTRY.—JEWELLING OF JEWELS.—TIMBER AND LUMBER.—LIFE GEM.—SECURITY IN VARIETY.—PANIC RUN ON THE BANKS.—CHILD CHRISTIANS.—TONES OF MATURITY.—VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE IN LAPSE OF TIME.—NO CHANGE OF TRUTH.—DOCTRINE DEFINED.—MODIFIED SYMBOLS OF EXPRESSION.—ALARM SOFTENED.—INCONSISTENT PRETEXTS.—UNITY OF CHURCH.—THE CATARACT.—FULLNESS AND VARIETY HEREAFTER.

VARIETY is a law of Nature. It reigns in every department. In order to comprehend its enforcement in spiritual spheres, we must mark its prevalence in the physical. There are two aspects of it there; —the variation which distinguishes different things and that which marks the same creature at different periods. The distinction between one man and another, or between one plant and another, belongs to the first. The difference between the man and boy, or between the plant in the spring and in the autumn, to the second. Take it altogether, there is no end discovered to the workings of this law. There is a fullness of the earth, animate and inanimate, which we are

beginning to detect, and which we never can measure. But that fullness does not consist anywhere in the multiplication of the same forms. It consists in countless diversities of form. We become acquainted with the scope of the creation only as we learn to detect its various modes, and to recognize life where it had not been apparent. A man walks away from other men, and enters what he calls the solitude of the forest. For awhile it seems, in the contrast, to be enveloped in utter seclusion, and locked in an absolute emptiness. But presently the birds, twittering among the twigs, announce themselves at home, and fancy the forest for their private parlor. By and by sportive creatures leap in the thickets; this is their abode. A closer scrutiny finds insects clinging under leaves, stretched out on twigs, dancing in sunbeams, or crawling over the ground. The observer admits that the domain of natural history is ampler than he had esteemed it, because it is vastly more versatile in its departments. Presently a sharp sound frightens away all these creatures; and the man, standing in the depths of that forest, by the margin of that lake, seems once more to be entirely alone. But he turns up the sod, and it teems with other life. He looks through a microscope, and the water drops are populous globes, and the atoms are transformed to hosts and nations. He goes upon the sea, and the classification of marine nature which he had studied is soon

exhausted. His marine museum constantly enlarges around him, and his vocabulary fails him. And he can not resist the conclusion, that beneath the surface hosts of living things play that never reach the surface nor shed their debris on human sight. The water spawn is multiplied without end, because it is diversified without limit. Yet there is ever the single principle of life. There is ever the one law by which a plant must live whatever its form. There is but one principle of animal subsistence. The boundlessness of species leaves in full force the unity of existence. A fish has a very different organ of breath from that of a bird; but a fish must breathe.

The filaments of flowers differ in their structure, but every flower needs filamentary tubes. The first law of nature, then, which we notice here, is *unity of life in variety of lives*.

There is also the variation by lapse of time. The Fauna and Flora of this globe, taken in their whole range, can be shown to have changed in the revolution of ages; there have been different eras of them, plainly marked by their different memorials. If you take up the history of any animal tribe, you will find it changing all through the cycles of its duration.

An arborist will tell you the same fact of trees. Whatever exceptions there may be to the law, the law is in full force across the concentric layers of



development in time, as well as through the interstices of present distinction.

It is so with man. Man is not only different now in places and races, but man, as a whole, changes in ages.

The American people are not only unlike other people, but they are modified in many circumstantial aspects since the birth of the nation. The Anglo-Saxon race would not recognize now its primeval Angles and Saxons. None the less, in all lapse of time, a tree is a tree, a bird is a bird, and a man is a man. Plato or Solomon could give as nice a definition of manhood as any modern psychologist.

Time plies ceaseless changes, but never changes God's law of living or God's definition of life. And so it comes about, not that there is any confusion or obscuring of the elemental vitality by variations of form, but that there is a distinct and further enumeration of it. There is a confirmation afresh in every variety, and essential substance proves itself exhaustless by innumerable manifestations. We discern the unity of life in variety of Dispensation.

To get at that which is vital, we must eliminate whatever is various, and make full allowance for whatever is incidental. The secret of it can not be known unless by discriminating what is casual from what is essential. The indestructible exhibits itself through the shiftings of the phenomenal. Science

studies this secret in the realm of physical space, distinguishing substance from its mutable forms. Faith grasps it in the soul ranges both here and hereafter, discovering thus the unity of eternal life, through all its transitions. A candid mind must discern these things:—that there are distinct shapings and styles of the same vital condition of soul at the same time, in different persons; that spiritual life varies its style at different times; and that so much the more it remains spiritual life, in its essence that never changes and never has changed.

Recognition of these facts elicits a nicer sense of harmony between the life realm around and within us, and that beyond us. It might astonish us to discover how many human spirits are plunged in the labyrinth of perplexity, while they seek shadows for substance. They are baffled of faith just because they have not the *sensation* of faith which they suppose to be indispensable.

By sensation is intended that *reflex* action of vital force which is the subject of passing consciousness. To the apprehension of many the limits of sensation are the limits of life. And the consequence is that one person thinks he must have the experience, because he has some analogous sensitiveness, and another thinks that because he has not the sensation, he can not have the fact, the state. Now, startling as the discovery may be to many, in its bearings on their

religious history, it is a simple fact that a true Christian experience can not be a settled sequence of emotions following each other always in a given order. To some it appears to be nothing else. They are wondering at it,—they are waiting for it, in just such an expectation.

But it is no such thing. It is not merely that there are deviations from the order; that there are rare exceptions. There is no such order. There is endless variety, not just as an *occurrence*; but as a *law* of new creation.

Let us take the essential fact in a Christian life, which we call *conviction of sin*. *Perception* of sin is a fact, is an element of every genuine regeneration. It must be, if a perverted nature is to be regenerated. But, as a *sensation*, it is wholly different in separate persons. It must vary, for two reasons. One is, the variety of individual make; the other is the diversity in the apprehension of truth, either by the tenor of general education, or by the mode in which it reaches the mind.

You would think it extremely unnatural to see all in one house acting precisely in the same manner, if the cry of fire should be suddenly raised within the walls. Men would reveal themselves naturally in that case, and so, very variously, would express themselves simply, and for that very reason would be contrasted in expression. They would feel intensely, and

that very intensity would render their intonation distinct and peculiar. There would be less imitation and less reciprocal influence than there is at ordinary moments. The man who walks coolly to the window and tears out the sash, is as thoroughly convinced as the woman who snatches up her child and bemoans it with kisses. The woman who swoons to unconsciousness is as convinced as the fireman who comes to the rescue.

But usually there is less uniformity in the preparation of mind, or in the approach of truth, than is here supposed. There is difference in the degree and rate of perceptive progress. Suppose two passengers to be in a ship that is wrecked, and at day-break, fast sinking. One has trodden the deck all night long, and heard all the white-lipped words that have passed, and seen all the baffled endeavors of the crew. He has looked down into the hold when they measured the water. He has seen that it gained on the pumps. He has felt the throbs of the quivering hull, and seen the main-sail torn into shreds. The other fell asleep early in the evening. He was perturbed to a degree in the first hours of the storm. But he has slept himself into a confusion. The peril of the night has mingled in his sleep oddly with thoughts of green fields at home, and even now when the vessel gives terrible lurches, all at once he thinks he is rocked in a cradle of childhood. He awakes

at the cry of alarm. He rouses himself, in the vague conception that on shipboard there is disaster. He tumbles up to the deck, bewildered, and before he is well awake, is in the life-boat, staring about him, while others see the giant hulk go gurgling down. And see, still another fragile form is there. You hear a faint voice. It is that of an invalid in his berth, so sea-sick that he scarcely has distinct thought to give to this crisis. He knows what is going on, but he is, somehow, benumbed, and quietly suffers the steward to lift him, and carry him on board the life-boat. In each of these there is a thorough, practical, efficient conviction. We have noticed thus, it is true, only the self-interest side of experience—the anxiety to render ourselves safe. *True* desire for life, like true life itself, must have two parts—a desire to be saved to our God, as well as a desire to secure our own souls.

There is a difference in the way in which the truth accosts you, and the tone of its voice. Startling conviction is one style; stirring conviction is another; melting conviction is another. If one approach you softly, and suddenly give you a stroke on the shoulder, or shout in your ear, you tell him, in a vexed accent, You startled me. But if you hear him calling before you see him, and even if you were convinced previously, by expectation, you believe just as positively in his arrival.

A dear one lies there dying before your eyes. You have been so heavy-hearted, so wrenched and racked with suspense—its shuddering chill one hour, and the next its scorching fever, that you know not what you look for; and some one comes suddenly to you, to say “there is a change”—that change that people call “a change,” as if there were no other change, and you stand shivering feebly at the foot of the bed; *that* is conviction, certainly. But suppose otherwise;—that as you sit by the side of that pallid face, it tints more and more of an unearthly consciousness, and the half-fledged angel whispers, Let me go, for I am going home. Remember me, and meet me, —*that* also is conviction—but a soothing peace is in it. Now in those steps and stages of spiritual intelligence, which we call conviction of sin—which we might as well call perception—there is a wide margin for the comment—the pause of our own reflex sensations. They vary as much as clouds vary in their convictions of the sunlight which tints and pictures them. Thorough conviction of sin does not precede conversion. It can not. It *is* a conversion. It is the highest development of Christian life. Appreciation of sinfulness is never adequate until that final moment when the soul rids itself of sin. Then only can it know what sin is, when it knows a perfect holiness. But meantime these glimmerings and glimpses play upon the soul to kindle it to ac-

tion. And many a man has his convictions without ever knowing what they are, as we pass famous places on the road and afterwards inquire for them. Has them in his low spirits. Has them in his softened feelings. Has them in his unusual stirs. Has them in his dreams; and lets them pass as strange sentiments while he waits for them to come.

Many souls taught of men and not of God, wait for a technical, geographical experience, just as ignorant travelers might look to see the equator, like a belt, when they cross the line, or think to find Europe of a different color from America, because it is thus depicted in the atlas which they studied.

Still further: that variety which preserves essential unity, diversifies Christian character throughout its development. That force which makes a man a Christian is not like that which makes a pile of wood or piles of stone into a building; it is not like that which makes a woolen or silken fabric into a garment; it is not the shaping or the making up; but it is that which makes a stone a jewel—making many precious stones; and it is hard to tell why one is a ruby, and another is a pearl, and another now and then is a diamond. There is a great distinction between timber and lumber. The same stout oak may be wrought into heavy beams, or split into slender staves. It may be curiously carved to grace a stair-case, or it may be laid out in solid plankings that shall guard the ship's

deck, and forbid the pert dash of the waves. And there are many soul-timbers that are differently lumbered in the cut and conformation of life. That which constitutes a sacred life, then, reduced to its own essence, exists as a *state* towards God, a *relation* to Christ, and not as a sensational or intuitional grasp of that relation within the soul.

A man might just as well determine the reality of an object, or its existence in the sunlight, by seeking for the presence and the measure of its shadow, cast towards him, as determine the substance of a spiritual state, by the magnitude of its reflex emotion.

The essence of Christian life is a trust that looks, and a purpose that sets, towards the divine care. That germ, that life-pith, you may miss amid the shouts of rapture and the swelterings of pathetic sentiment. It may be wanting in the most correct behavior and the most faithful zeal. But you *may trace* it in endless variations, like a melody in musical changes. There are children of God this day in a mad-house, careering wildly over the floor. There *are idiot children of God*. You can be a Christian when you are faint and sad. You can be a Christian when you are tempted. There are very few Christians that are not delirious awhile before they die. It will not do to give up hope at every crisis. Ignorance of the scope of Christian security is a source of dismay. Some silly spirits are seized with a misgiving about their funded hopes; just



as foolish depositors and note-holders are sometimes smitten with panic, and rush to the banks to demand their deposits. So these rush to the gospel, questioning, clamorous and pallid. As those batter at the doors, so these come frantically to the church, or to the pavilion of God. They demand that their funded hopes be given back to them. They beg to take them out of the church;—*that* is not so much. But they come to get their vested prayers, and promises, and pledges, once made to God, back into their own hands. They crave to take into their burning, trembling fingers, all their Christian interests and exercises, and tie them up in old bags of moroseness, and hide them in secret places of avoidance, so that no one shall know that they ever thought themselves Christians at all. They come and say, Lord, give me back all my profession to thee, all my entrustment; give up every covenant thought I ever had, and I yield thee this bank-book of thy promises. Lord, let me go. I do not feel as I once felt. I am afraid to go on with this trust. And some of them *go*, and squander it all away. And some of them are straightway robbed. And now and then one is persuaded to come back, looking humbled and ashamed. Lord, after all, I am come again—I, the poor, ingrate wretch—I, the frantic coward—I, that began to be frightened against God—I, that disbelieved thee, and so learned at last to disbelieve the universe, and to have nothing but

doubt and terror—I come again. Wilt thou take me back? I am come with a little beggarly remnant of hope, to put it out to safety and to interest in thy word of everlasting trust.” And the poor soul, thankful to be taken back, murmurs on its wiser, homeward way of peace, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

That which makes any soul alive to God is a prompt step, on its own feet; an eager, willing thrill of its own nerves; a patient, steady obedience of its own powers as they are and where they are. And it is a delicious thought that there are such varieties to illustrate and expound, before us, the one simplicity, the indivisible element of all true vitality. For they show it, plainly, to be a self-repudiation, and not a self-exaltation. They photograph it as an immanent act, and not a profound, progressive culture. They illustrate its adaptation, each in his own province and his own way, to any stage of history, to any condition of life. They are analogous to the varieties of life in the domain of nature. Observe the child Christian. He inhales the same simple Gospel in his heart, as his little lungs take the same fresh air. He looks with his gemmy thoughts on the sublime firmament of glory, bright-eyed on its mystery, laughing-eyed on its portents, trust-eyed on its stars, just as children’s eyes look upon the literal sky. He holds the chain of promise in a dimpled, moist, implicit clasp, just as

you have felt a child's soft palm clinging in love strength. So confiding, so mighty in its tenderness, because it has no thought of letting go.

Child Christians there are, whose heads are reckoned white with age on earth ;—but they are called flaxen-haired on high. We call them wrinkled here, but *there* they call them dimpled. They seem to us to be very dull and still, but the hand almighty rocks their cradles when they cry.

Child Christians and Christian children ! It has become popular in literary trifling, to pick up the odd sayings of childhood, the searching questions and the singular speeches they make, as if we were just finding out that little children can think deep thoughts, and look up to God with their own eyes. But their Christ told it long ago, when he said,—Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

There are various tones of maturity. There is a *masculinity* of faith which encounters rugged activities of service ; and there is a *femininity*, that loves to prepare graceful thoughts of sweet devotion. The same Christ who sits with the tired fishermen followers beside the fire on the shore, accepts from a woman's hand the alabaster box. The student soul is not idle when he ponders God's ways, nor profane when he telescopes the stars. But the mechanic Christian works at the jobs of days' work—the multiplying duties that come one by one. The poetic spirit giving praise,

need not sigh because it is not a polemic spirit fighting with error. He who made the ox to draw, made the canary bird to sing. If among men, and in their service, Homer has his fame as well as Cæsar, so in the annals of Redemption, the singing thought serves Christ as truly as the preaching tongue. There is a plaintive tone of hope subdued, but steadfast, of patience holding on, which is to other faith more rapturous, more triumphant, what the nightingale is to the lark. God made them both. God blesses both, for both bless him.

The same simplicity of everlasting life can be cultivated in the ardent nature to an ardent piety, and in the phlegmatic make to a sober tenor. The transparent heart need not try to knit itself into profound obscurity, nor the profound mind to unbosom itself in lavish utterances and buoyant exercises. The eccentric mind may be a steadfast believer, still eccentric; and the orderly, rule-and-method creature of habit, vivacious and still sedate; as He who built the stars on axles, shot the comets on their flashing paths. The hosts on earth are to be as various as the hosts on high.

Of equal moment is the variation of Christian experience in the lapse of Time. It is expressly important at this juncture to understand the fact, when sacred scenery wears the garb of spring. Unquestionably dispensations change. Truth never varies. There is an adaptation to the age in which we live,

not of God's truth in doctrine, but of that truth in vital expression.

Mistaking this, many are perplexed. They discard the doctrines of truth, while they seek to fit them to the times. In mutilation of any true doctrine, there is a fracture of *all* truth, as surely as there is a detuning of a musical instrument in breaking one of its strings. It is all idle for a man to say that he has no creed. Every man has a creed, but some have broken creeds. They hold truth, that is to say, in fractions, and the boast of "no creed" is just the boast that there is nothing with which to hold the pieces together. There is no change in any fact which God has spoken, or which God has done. Until there is, there can be no change in the doctrine of it, *for a true doctrine is only the terrestrial statement of a celestial fact*,—incomplete, but still correct. There is, however, a change in the experience of souls, and so in their experimental views of doctrine and of fact. Upon the principles already laid down, there *must* be various eras of the grace of God. The habit of the human mind is different to-day from that of centuries gone by. Such change in man can not alter a jot or tittle of God's truth. It can not palliate its suppression or abridgement. But it varies its mode and order of reception. The conveyance of ideas, their notional conception, and their interlinking, are moulded afresh. The notions of men are always new. The symbols of

expression are as various as the autographs of writers. Time was, when alarm was the first and paramount force upon the heart to bring it to consideration. The whole conception of terror was quick, terse and figurative. This is not so now. The knowledge of Divine goodness in the works of nature has expanded on the understanding to such a degree, as to displace that superstitious awe with which the hidden forces of nature had been regarded. A thunder storm is not what it was in terror, but it is grander than it was in suggestion. Does it follow that I believe less in thunder storms? The sea voice is not so threatening, and yet the sea voice is more majestic. Do I less hear the waves thereof roar;—the Lord of Hosts is his name? Night is less gloomy and more sublime. Matter is less awful and more inspired. And so the modes of conception, the symbols of thought, are modified. They who deny future punishment because they do not see it or image it as their fathers did, might as well dispute the reality of fire, because they do not kindle it as the ancients did. They who deride the luster of Christian assurance because they do not utter it in quaint terms of old, should sooner scout the lighting of their households because they can not speak of tapers and of lamps so much. They who reject the power of the world to come, as a thing gone to disuse, because it does not wear the garb of antiquity, might as well go naked because the fashion of all dress has changed.

But, on the other hand, they who palter and procrastinate compliance with this Gospel, and acceptance of this life on its terms, because they are struggling to pass through a legitimate and stereotyped succession of emotions, and to liken their soul history to history gone by, might as well go down into the charnel house and wrap themselves in the cerements of ancient mummies, whose souls are fled, until their lives shall shape themselves as theirs had shaped, and their features copy them.

There is a splendid unity of God's church based upon the unity of all spheres, in all the lapse of time. But that unity is grand in its variety as the cataract is grand that rolls its waters, one living tide, in ever changing drops, along the pediment of ages—and men go to see it as the wondrous spectacle of that which for ever changes and for ever is unchanged.

There is the same power of God's spirit in these times as in olden days of fame. But you must obey it as it overshadows *you*, not in the temple ritual, nor in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, but in these city streets, and these furnished houses, and these pleasant pews, and these commercial conditions, and these political demands.

Prayer is as promised and as potent as it was when Elijah prayed, but a modern soul must pray in modern words, and not in an unknown tongue.

Revival is as ready and real and rich as in the days

of Whitefield or of Paul, but it must be revival of a simple trust and a fresh reverence and a new song for the same Savior and the same God. And in the ages to come, when God's works of new creation are all finished, and he sees each one good after *his kind*, all these shall glow in the beauty of that Divine satisfaction, and find room in that boundless fullness. He is filling the world to come with an enfolding and enveloping variety, just as he is filling this earth. Beings, of whose existence we take no cognizance with such faculties as these, are on the way with us, marching by our side. We shall discern them there. The Christ of God is gone up on high, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. How full—how full, how inexhaustibly he fills his glory. It is past the ken of thought. Past the measure of the eons of eons is it. It is the fullness of God. But in that fullness there is a separate place for every humble spirit; a sure, safe place for every ransomed one; a sweet home for every child of God.



## CHAPTER VII.

### VARIATION IN MOOD.

NOT CHANGEABLE FAITH.—RANGE OF MELODY.—MOODS ARE UNCONSCIOUS RESULTS OF EXTERNAL FORCES.—FALSE AND TRUE EDUCATION.—THE GRASSPLOT.—THE SANDS.—GOD'S CHILDREN TAUGHT WITHOUT SYSTEM.—BABYHOOD MOODS.—HUMANITY. INFANTILE.—NORMAL PLAY OF CONSCIOUSNESS RESTRICTED.—CONTRACTION OF LUNGS.—SUBSIDENCE OF WATER AFTER SHOWERS.—SLEEP POSTURES.—“INDULGING A HOPE.”—CORRECTING A HOPE.—MIND WEATHERS.—MIND MISTS.—THEIR PERILS.—THEIR TREATMENT.—MIND TEMPEST.—THE CHEER.—THE CLEARING.—MIND CLIMATES.—THE TROPIC.—THE ARCTIC.—MIND TEMPERATURE.—EACH AND HARMONY OF MOODS BY TRUE FAITH.

OVER and above the range of differences which we have called a law of variety, there is a play of volatile condition which may be called the realm of *mood*. The former is a permanent distinction, as of *genera* and of *species*.

The latter is a vibrant versatility, as of light and shade.

It is a grave question how far mood shall be recognized as a legitimate envelope of spiritual life. There may be a chameleon faith, which is only a fancy. There may be a variable emotion, which is only an illusion, because it never has the color which it seems to have. A “changeable silk,” as it is called, looks, now brown, and now green, because it is never quite

green, and never quite brown, but always composite of the two. And a changeable robe of religion looks now brilliant, and now dingy, because it is never thoroughly humbled, and never thoroughly elate. But there is a Law of Mood in spiritual life,—to recognize which would teach some flutterers how to flutter heavenward, and exorcise from other breasts the sullen, stalking devil of *despondency*.

An appreciation of the range of mood, would be like an appreciation of the range of melody. It used to be supposed that children should not sing as children, but should grow up to that, as to other accomplishments of maturity, and that the aged should desist from singing. But children's hymns, in childhood melodies, are already published, as a separate sphere of musical education; and the man will come forth presently, who will arrange a class of utterance and a style of accompaniment, for choirs of the aged. So the time will come, when human souls will believe that they can praise God in each separate mood.

By moods here, are meant those involuntary conditions of the spirit life, which result from the control of external circumstances—unaccountable, and even imperceptible, as those circumstances often are.

The extrinsic influences that tell on mental states are always subtle, often inappreciable, and incessant in their interchange. Moods, therefore, are conditions which invest us with inscrutable but resistless law.

The aim of false education, is to reduce the actings of the soul to one mode of conception, or at least to enforce limits of their range.

The truth of education, and the religion of it, aim to multiply their harmonies, and so regulate their transitions.

You may not clasp a certain sequence, even of truth, on the growing thought, and bid it grow to that, and to naught besides. You might as well stamp that motto seal upon the grassplot before your door. Frosts will crack it into contradictions. Thaws will melt it out of shape. New grass-blades of venturous and peeping fancy will grow up to it, and overgrow it, and by the very twisting of their tender roots, to reach it, will displace it.

You might as well clasp your formula upon the ocean sands. The tides will read it wrong at first, then try to read it backwards and awry; then print it crooked while they loosen its grasp; then print it upside down, until they have washed it out.

The truth of God's word is not dependent on its order of conception in the human mind, nor its measure of periods there. Thinking to preserve it by our systematic plans, we have often forgotten that it is not spoken to us systematically, either in the Book of Creation or the Bible Book. God's children are taught in his Books of Nature, of Providence, of Inspiration, not as children are taught sciences in

classes, but as children are taught daily truths at home, in work and in play—learning, each one, first, what truth may happen to be nearest to him—picking up their lessons on occasion.

The moods of infancy are miniature of all humanity. Babyhood is in ceaseless effervescence. Its transitions are so volatile, because they are so electric. Its sensations are so keen, because its fibers are so fine. That must be a stupid or a cruel nurse who, because now and then the infant bounds in her arms, tosses it mechanically by the hour, till its limbs are numb.

She must be a weak mother who, because the infant tries sometimes to speak, and prattles with wondrous distinctness, nudges it and coaxes it incessantly to say its crooked words on exhibition. The little brow often knits, and droops profoundly. The tender hands are dropping toys, and *clutching at philosophies*. The sparkling eyes gleam and dilate, asking vast questions of theology, which no mortal mother undertakes to answer—none but the immortal.

Man is the infant of days. He is the youngest born of the creation—the baby pet of this whole universe. Other beings make so much of him, and study him so carefully, not because he is so stout (which he sometimes thinks to be the reason), but because he is so fragile. The race grows hitherto a youngling on the lap of Time, a gurgling, crowing angel, clamorous for

all things, and venturesomely creeping after all, but reaching few. There is not the stateliest of all creatures grown, that would not touch him gently, not the noblest seraph, pacing this way, that would not stop and smile to him. But his little face dimples one hour with glee, and the next, empurples with disappointment.

Human consciousness in its normal exercises, ranges as legitimately, as rationally, in one mood as in another, fitting its truth in each without perversion.

But by perverse proclivity, by chronic contractions, by warpings from without, men render some of them unserviceable and diseased. So that the thought, the moment it enters a certain mood, is breathing morbid breath in a morbid atmosphere, and there are other moods in which it can not breathe; while another condition, under other influences from without, though no more salubrious in itself, is a ventilated chamber in which the faculties may toil or repose with comfort. There are states, or atmospheres of thought, into which some men can take their religion, their metaphysics and their social love. There are others in which nothing but their metaphysics can survive. Others where they are only moralists. Others where they can be nothing more than skeptics. And often you will see that religion has not the range of a man's emotive state, but it has an emotive state to itself, a chamber of the soul furnished for it, like a lodger who may not

trespass on the rooms of others, but may keep his own rooms. In that case, religion becomes, not the circulation through the phases of thought to sanctify them, but a phase of thought constrained, and therefore morbid; not the circulation of blood through the veins, but a blood clot or an aneurism.

Often, there is a limited range of phases cherished, a suit of altered feelings, opening into one another handily, still too few. The lungs can disuse some of their air cells, until they collapse and close, and, nevertheless, cherish life enough in the chest, to withstand the contraction from a fatal reach. So the spirit can have some variety of religion without expanding to its full proportions.

In this way our religious habits, sometimes, like our intellectual habits, restrict the flow of spiritual life. Very often, while our standard seems too large for us, and because it seems too large, we are shrunken by our standard.

After rain the water spreads for awhile in plashing puddles and over-brimmed streams, finding unaccustomed beds. There has not been any water there for a long time—perhaps you never saw water there before. And yet this rocky run, along the roadside, seems to have been built for a water-course, and this gully down the hill side opens naturally to the new rill. But soon the water subsides by its habitual inlets to its standard level and its familiar ponds. So,

after life has been freshened and revived, you will find high thoughts trickling into common ways, and rippling over dry paths awhile. But such irregular, sacred thought requires to itself the consecrated moment, the closet scene. Some men can admit their spirituality into their solemnity only. Others are religious in their joyous states alone. Others are only occupied with celestial thoughts when their spirits droop under some brooding cloud of heaven. Others must keep spiritual life astir, as in a freezing day men stir their blood, by stampings of activity. We have known men to lose their faith in a calamity. We have known others who never find it except in the ruins of some castle, or the ashes of some treasure. And there are many to whom it is the inspiration of a prevalent frenzy, intermittent and spasmodic. The mistake is in the limitation. When one discovers that he can sleep soundly but in a single posture, he may judge that there is something out of order in his frame. There are many of us who can not sleep on our left sides without a fluttering, or on our backs without a nightmare. We envy the chubby children that can slumber softly, tipped on their very noses, the cozy matrons that can nod neatly in their arm-chairs, the rubicund, rough teamsters that can sleep and drive at one and the same time. And in the same way many hearts can rest in one recumbence of the thought and not in another.

Really, there is no such thing possible at last, as the reduction of the human consciousness to one complexion. The attempt has issued either in obstruction or perversion. It has resulted thus in intellectual theory. It results thus in spiritual force. It is common, for example, to bound the soul's life by the mood of indulgence. Many a man supposes his Christianity to be in full vigor only when he "*indulges a hope*." But it may be just as vigorous at a time when he *punishes* his hope, and locks it up, like an unruly child, in some closet of repentance.

The involuntary states which sway the consciousness, are not for the most part conscious states. They are not thoughts themselves, but atmospheres of thought. Moods are Mind Weathers. Soul skill is neither to reject them, nor to elude them, but fitting to them the vesture and the temperature of life, to take advantage of them, and turn them into use.

There are Mind Mists that rise suddenly and spread apace. It is an error to regard ourselves as if we could always reason with an equal clearness, or feel with a like susceptibility. Sometimes, indeed, we are most impressed by an apparent imminence of truth which agitates and confuses our perceptions. To be oppressed by a truth, is to be confounded by it. The fog which rises from the ocean and enwraps the shore in obscurity, does but convey the more intensely, oceanic scents and sounds ; and by its uniform drapery flung



over sea and land, and its touch on all objects, like a marine exudation, makes the land shudder, as if upon the sea. In the same way the damp of mystery, the density of doubt, which cover us in our approach to the unfathomable, the inaccessible, seem, as they sprinkle us with spray, to shroud this solid insularity of life with speculative haze. And there are spirits dwelling in their grand outstretchings near the coast of Time, that are often steeped in these brooding and enwreathing influences of awe. It results as often, that while their consciousness is saturate with suggestion of the Infinite, it does not see distinctly, and is but indistinctly seen. Perhaps there is no intellect which is not at times pervaded by this mist. In such a plight it is easy either to mistake a cloud bank of speculation for a mountain of discovered truth, or to run perilously on a crag of error precipiced to sin, taking it for a vaporous and lambent play of sentiment.

There is a regulation of the life in this condition. It is useless to sit and shiver. It is as useless to dash recklessly.

Neither is it worth while to believe that the sky has been dissolved in mist, and that a dissolving sky has drowned the globe. If the sky should dissolve as readily as some have fancied, the world would have been washed away ages ago. But in physical mists men manage to control them by distinct recognition of them. Suppose a child to come in

and complain, "Father the stars are all gone out. The hill has been put away. The neighbors' houses are all melted. There are no fences. The road is turned to blackness." The father only smiles and says, "It is the mist, my child. Wait till it disappears. But look out how you go just now."

And so you hear many frightened intellects, babbling in the cry of verse, or groaning in an interjectional and prosaic philosophy, "There is no longer any certainty or any truth. The stars on high are sponged away. The solid rock is gone. Granite and basalt now melt to haze. The earth floats and pitches like an old stranded hulk at high tide; it is going off. We can see nothing. We can not find our places. There is nothing. There never was any thing. There never will be any thing." Be still, ye simpletons, ye frenzied friends, be still. The world is firm enough, but you are in a *miserable fog*. Now the haze of doubt will certainly overspread us at some time, and it may come up suddenly after a bright sunrise, making us doubt whether the sun did rise at all. If one will only learn to say at such a time, "It is a misty morning,"—he shall have learned much.

But it is seldom that such brooding weather passes off without a real storm. The wind that moaned, begins to roar. The trees of circumstance, that shuddered, begin to shake and toss, mad now at each other and their roots. The drenching showers come, or the

snow-drifts pile, anywhere but where they should. You would like well enough to have them wreathed and folded in the road-stead, to be trodden under your horses' glittering hoofs, and cut by the runners of elegant sleighs. But they pile by the *roadside*, to beguile you and make you flounder. They block up your doors, and blind your paths.

It is so in mental history. The mood of gloomy doubt or pensive diffidence is very apt to whirl away in a tempest, and a torrent, and a sleet of all positive difficulty and accumulated trouble. There are tempests sweeping around the human heart. They may come in the form of terrible temptation. They may come in the keen, icy touch of a freezing world—a frozen want, a howling blast of outside adversity, a whirling, veering hurricane of disaster.

But we consider rather the interior state, which may or may not have its exterior cause.

The mind must defend itself, as the body does, by artificial aid. It is a time to light blazing fires, and look into the coals, and talk with one another. It is necessary to go out in storms. But you may go so wrapped with the thoughts and lives of former men, coated and gloved with memories and rehearsals, as the traveler wraps himself in skins and woolen stuffs that once held and shielded other bodies; as even tender, feeble ladies go, warm-clad in furs that once protected arctic animals.

Ships on the sea were made to encounter winds and waves,—so were souls in time. Ships must lie to and tack in gales,—and so must minds. It is more famous to outride them, than to run before them.

And, as in nature, so in mind life, the clear shining comes after rain. That exquisite depth of azure, that crystal gleaming of the atmosphere, that sparkling fretwork of the landscape—what are these, but emblems of the halcyon life ensuing in man's breast, when from the shock of some paroxysmal thought, or from the drooping and the drenching of some gloomy spell, consciousness comes forth refreshed and basking,—when life's landscape glistens as freshly as if it were just created, when every object is transformed—the rubbish and *debris* are swept from view—torrents of foamy gladness pulse down the rocks, and he says within himself, That was a grand and blessed storm after all, and has done the world great good.

Between the tempest and the calm of soul, there is every variety of atmosphere, in delicate and constant play. Changing incessantly, the sky of thought takes any gazer by surprise. There is not space here to delineate the mind drought and the mind freshet. The one we have all known, when we panted like a bird with open beak for a fresh drop of thought,—when, at every stir of progress, the commonplace dust of the beaten track, which had been ground under our feet,

and all feet, flew up to choke us, and the fields that used to bloom with verdure, and the trees that used to bend with fruit, stood yellow and forlorn. That was mind drought. Mind freshet occurs, when thought overbrims expression, and bears away the barriers of association and of habit.

Nor may we linger to speak of the climates which classify different types of intellect, and regulate and generalize their weathers. There is the tropic clime of soul, so splendid in its beauty, so radiant in its tints, so luscious in its fruitage, so languid in its dreaminess, so passionate in its love, so perilous in its poisons and its monsters, so terrible in its tornados, so gorgeous in its forests, so wild and waste in its deserts, so noble and prolific, so terrible and so sweet. Who has a tropic climate for his mental home,—let him be a poet, let him be a soldier, let him thank his God, let him also fear him and rule his spirit well.

There is the frigid zone of mind, which they who affect to despise, know not. It dwells hard by God's polar purpose, and it cools the heated earth, and is not so cold itself as some suppose, nor devoid of an inland sea. The stillness is majestic round it, and the firmament massive overhead, is brilliant in its stars, and coruscating in its auroral glances.

Let him whose soul has such a polar habitat, discipline his sturdy patience into resolute endeavor, and

contemplate Divine decrees. There is the temperate realm, of larger range and ordinary tenor, in which life plans its peaceful errands and mankind are served. Let him whose spirit dwells in that, till well its sweet content, and with its products mediate between the freezing and the burning realms,—like some tinkling rill that runs from mountain snows to sand plains, and gladdens all the way.

Moods understood and used aright, will be to the spirit just what the members are to the corporeal frame. No one of them need be uncomely. No one useless. Each one will serve all, all subserving each. Within every phase of thought, the influence of other phases will be felt to chasten or to charge it. Within every stillness will be found a stiller depth, in the memory of stirrs and strengths. Every ardor, every prowess, will be nobler in the name of crystal hushes and of golden pauses. The spirit's prose will be radiant with poetic charms—the spirit's poetry will be as true as prose. A work-day will be effulgent with love hours,—love hours will be nerved by work. The week day will remember the Sabbath, and the Sabbath be not ashamed to own the week day. It will be as sunrise hints the sunset, and as sunset pledges dawn.

All this will be when a man's religion is no longer one mood of his life, but the life of all his moods. When his religion is no longer a cloud, a weather, in his sky, but the sky of all his weathers—the sun of all

his clouds. In this light it remains, that we look at evangelized life in some of its aspects here, in order that we may appreciate its luster hereafter, when it shall have boundless realm of range and unflagging faculties of adaptation. We call these phases, aspects, rather than features of character, because they are not so much separate traits, as they are the same faith trait seen from separate stand points. Whether the Christed thought hush in its serenity, or spring in its activity, or sparkle in its beauty; whether it stand on tiptoe of expectation, or turn in gracefulness of retrospect, we pause only to admire its symmetry of form and its buoyancy of life, as you stand to watch a bird on the wing and in the boughs, or as you delight in the prisms of the rainbow.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SOUL STILLNESS.

MEMBRANOUS RELATION OF INNER AND OUTER LIFE.—THE BLUSH.—THE WELL-DEPTH.—PARTIALITY DISTINCT FROM HYPOCRISY.—WORK WITHOUT FOOD.—BUSINESS MEN.—ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD RELIGION.—REMEDY.—RETREAT.—HIDINGS OF NATURE.—AWE LOOK A LOVE LOOK.—MEDITATION THE HOME OF RESOLUTION.—FRENZY AND FLIPPANCY.—CHRISTIAN ABASHING.—FAITH-DIFFIDENCE IS FAITH-DELIGHT.—QUIESCENT CHRISTIANITY NEGLECTED NOW.—THE OAK.—VORACITY AND DYSPEPSIA OF SOUL.—FLURRY OF RIGHT.—BITTERNESS OF BENEVOLENCE.—JAR OF IMPATIENCE.—SEA FROTH.—THE TIME HUSH OF TERROR.—FAITH HUSH OF EXPECTATION.—SILENCE THE SECRET OF INTELLIGENCE.—THE WELL-BRED WAITER.—WAITING ON GOD.—VIRTUE OF VICISSITUDES.—SWEET SOLITUDE.

SOUL moods are to be free in their play, like light and shade, ruled to no established sequence. Soul moods, nevertheless, are to be cultivated in genial and healthy proportion. Vitality is always organic. Its actings have a definite relation to one another. That relation is a true concord. This fact distinguishes between vital union of forces, and that which is simply mechanical or artificial. In the body there is this relation, between the organs and their cuticles, between the veins and the arteries, between the heart and the limbs.

In the soul there must be this consent between its secret workings and the play of outer actings. Soul



soundness, consists in nothing else than this inevitable membranous relation.

In a sound soul, the soul nerves run through the soul body, and impinge every point of external surface. The outer life of a soul is as full of invisible pores as the outer tissue of our frames. Their contractile force is health. Their lax gaping, or their obstruction and torpid close, is disorder and disease. The first effect of a true faith, is to restore the harmony between the inner and the outer life. For the trouble with most men is that they have lost the sensitiveness of that connection. Where that sensitiveness is pure and normal, it is impossible for the spirit to perceive any impression without, which does not touch the cell within, or to know the effervescence of a truth within, which does not glow into the life without. Soul life is before God beautiful, like the heart life of a blushing maiden, mantling the cheek incessantly, and sometimes storming the brow. Life before God is transparent, like a well beneath the sky, not without depths of meaning, but with depths in which the stars can shine.

The reason why so many detach their outer life from their inner state, is not usually an "*hypocrisy*." It is rather what the Scripture calls a "*partiality*." It is a disproportion between the still hours and the stirrings. It is a disarrangement which puts the activities before the serenities—before even the retirements of

the thought—just as if a laborer should resolve to do his day's work first, and afterwards make a voracious meal—breakfast, dinner and supper, all in one. He can neither work well, nor eat at last. So many a soul undertakes to live itself away, and then come home and rest, to talk, and believe, and profess, and then to think. It can accomplish neither. Most of us, though we do not fail so utterly, have a disproportion between our indoor life of spirit and our goings forth of way. We are like men of business, and crowding cares, who make nightly visits to their family circles, but who rarely have time to shake off the impressions of the outer world, and are almost strangers to their own children.

Many persons in their religion, as well as in their other affairs, are relatively inconsiderate, while they are not absolutely insincere.

Though a leaven of sincerity lie hidden within the heart, it has not yet leavened the whole lump of external life. In this way, religion itself, the sacredly meditative character of which is conserved in the very etymology of the word—*re-lego*, to choose again—a sifted and revised choice—becomes in many of its overt steps and constant habits an unconscious acting, and men either lash themselves into the spasmodic frenzy about them, or practice neatly the ceremonious formalism. It becomes either the mimicry of feelings and frames, or the routine of outward

duties, or the posture practice of forms and orders—sometimes, sadly enough, the cant of all combined.

Yet we must not judge rashly. Beneath much unconscious imitation and palpable semblance there may lurk the true intent, as there is some gold in every alloy. The remedy is in the mood of silence and the soul's reserve. Retreat is as requisite to the purity of thought, as rebound to the purity of life blood. Man's life needs to go aloof from all externality, as much as birds need to find nests in the boughs, and animals their forest homes, and flowers their closing petals, and seeds their pods. All nature hides. All vital forces lurk. All works of God are still at times.

Awe is not an elemental weakness, it is an elemental strength. Awe is the hue of the finite, looked fervently upon by the infinite, as the cerulean blue of the lake is the fond glance of the sky. If it did not image in its breast the rolling clouds and the deep azure, the lake could not sparkle in the rosy beam. Awe is to be discriminated from terror, and from superstition, not in degree, but in nature. Superstition, terror—these are awe deranged. True awe is the depth of love glance looking where it is beloved, with more reverence than on common sights.

Both the first fervor of religious reality and its deepening realization, must know this elevating impulse. The ease and recklessness which many spirits cherish, thinking them to be peace and comfort, are

as when a child plays on the gun breech, or skims the waves with pebbles. It is as impossible that he can have a real heaven who is pert or petulant about it, as it is that faith can be frivolity. Either such an one must be more than human, or what he sees must be less than divine.

So, too, the stillness of a true awe is as different from the speechlessness of dismay, as from the chattering of insolence, and the drowsiness of sloth. Meditation is the home of resolution, enclosing at once the chamber where it reposes, the study where it thinks, the closet where it prays. A resolution is real, is alive, in proportion as it is a meditation. This shall test its strength. When you mark a steady flowing river, that washes cities and waters farms, and floats a nation's treasure, you can always trace it to a forest solitude, or a mountain side, where the tiny gush is tinkling. And the rule is just as cogent, that when you admire the scope of a pure conversation, the sway of a heavenly vitality, you can trace it to the moment drops of quiet thought. Heroes of earth are reserved. But heroes of God's house are tranquil. What the religion of the present day and this present land most needs, is more thorough intonation. Noise dies in its concussion. Music is diffused in its vibration. Gesture may be an expression. It may confound and preclude all expression. In this matter, as in all others, there are two extremes, to one of which the

spiritual habits may incline; and they shall both resemble one another, more than either resembles the golden mean. The one is flippancy. The other is frenzy.

The callous flippant disdains the frenzied fanatic. God disdains at once the swaggering fop soul, and the staggering sot soul.

There are sometimes heard in social and public prayers, wheedlings of endearment, clasps of caress, and clamors of turbid thought, that leap to seize the name of God as with a coarse and fetid kiss. To boast loosely of an intimacy with the Almighty, is to prove that you have scarcely met him, just as the putting on airs of consequence, the parade of our great acquaintance, is proof that we have never known the best society. Christian abashing is a drawing nigh, and not a glance aloof. It is so soothed by the hush of the majesty about it, that you can no more terrify it with bombast sophistry, or theatrical alarms, than in the stillness of a massive midnight, one could make you tremble lest the stars should fall. Flippancy is so sure that God is good, as to doubt whether God is great. Frenzy is so sure that God is earnest, that it sees him always in a passion. Frenzy blinks and stamps until it seems to see him blinking and dancing in a kindred frenzy, as, when you wink your little eyes upon the stars, the stars are transformed to little winking, quivering eyes.

Faith's diffidence deepens into faith's delight. To look into the zenith, is to grow calm in lowliness, and clear in loftiness. The zenith vision is more overwhelming than any flushed or thunderous cloud. But it overwhelms us only with its peace,—peace in its outreach and its overflow. He who can translate the name of God, can tremble and can trust. His prayer is soft prayer. His prayer is fresh prayer. His prayer is moist with truth and godliness, dew dropped with suggestion of the infinite, as flower cups bedewed suggest the firmament that distills their joy. His prayer impresses men that he has been with God, rather than that he essays to bring God to him.

The quiescent mood of Christianity is as much undervalued at this day, as once it had been exaggerated. Pilgrimages and ascetic seclusions had been once esteemed the only Christian service. Now many think nothing can please their Maker, but an incessant turmoil.

But an oak is less agitated in its growing than a thistle.

Monkery and nunnery have been a closet insanity, that plotted suicide, not of the body only, but of the soul, by fastings. For fasting, they mistook starvation.

But there is such a thing as the undigesting habit of devouring truth and good things;—a hasty bolting of enormous quantities of principle and privilege. There ensues, of necessity, a morbid and dys-

peptic appetite and a restlessness of doing good, which takes no spiritual rest, but lashes itself on to what it calls a "progress," but what is really a nervousness and febrile feebleness of life, very wretched and forlorn, as if one should think to work wildly well all day, for sitting up all night.

Many religious opportunities, as they occur at evening services, in the assembling of benevolent societies, and even in the thoroughness of Sabbath exercises, become only extra tasks to lives overtasked already, because they know not the meaning of serenity, nor the posture of repose. The rule of many is to watch and pray moderately in their week life, and to *agonize* at the soul's times of sacred interval. They have found Sinai as they think, and Calvary, but never yet have they seen the Transfiguration upon Tabor. There results a flurry of right which is always wrong. There is also a bitterness of benevolence, like sweet juice of the grape, fermenting into acetous and alcoholic liquor.

There is the jar of impatience in expectation, like the recoil of the gun that bursts with its over load.

Sea froth subsides to a waste, inert scum; so does the seething extravagance of impotent endeavor. But stillness is to life what evening is to day.

Time itself hushes us with the solemnity of its very vanity. Why struggle so vehemently, when we must presently lie so still? The wrestlings and overthrows,

the battles and the victories, the vehemences and the vengeance—as scenes of Time—are but the patterings of rain-drops on the pavement, the strifes of insects in the air.

Christian stillness is a higher rest. Philosophy hushes in the gloom, like game in the thicket, lest it should be overheard, and rouse some pursuant terror to overtake its fugitive life. Faith hushes as one listens for the footfall of a friend, or to the first notes of music.

This spiritual silence becomes the secret of spiritual intelligence. Well-bred souls suffer their Lord to utter his whole sentence fully, before they make reply. Be it a sentence of nature, or of life dealing in event, or of inspired doctrine, or duty, in a statement of his word,—they get it distinctly first, they turn it over carefully, and they treasure it reverently. And thus their civility, is their intelligence and their alertness. There is a rudeness, too busy in his service to attend to what he has to say. There is a clumsy bustling, mistaken for prompt zeal, which interrupts at every comma, every other word, with crude reply, and then stammers incessantly, beg pardon—I supposed the sentence to be finished, and the all to have been said.

The old time language interpreted the old time faith to be a waiting upon God. True faith would rather wait upon the threshold or within the ante-chambers



of his glory, than chatter of his coming in the distant market place. What are called religious exercises, that is, the series of experimental vicissitudes which sum up a Christian life, are valuable, only in so far as they succeed in stilling the heart to a more perfect repose. Intense sorrow, whether of outward affliction, or of inward repentance, is a holy thing, a hallowing force, just when it hushes to a placid submission, a content and a calm, absolutely deeper than could otherwise be known. The spirit, like the child, cries itself to profounder rest. The same thing is true of intense and hallowing joys. They are the paths of pleasantness, because they fetch the thought to groves of peace. It is as inane to practice exercises of religion for their own sake, as to pace paths back and forth.

In speaking then of soul tranquillity, we speak the aim and end of all hopes and doubts, and griefs and gladness.

Round about you floods and blazes the testimony of your God. But hidden yonder, there is a spot shut in by wooded hills. There the soft verdure springs and waves, but is never pressed. There the sweet flower blooms, not ambitious to be plucked. The purling rivulet makes music of its own, while the sound of roaring waves grows faint, and whispers from the distance. The fitful scream of the steam car, and its rapid whirl of obedient wheels,

sounds there an instant, and is spent as soon as the hawk's flighty call. By day the swift bird delights to alight alone, and then speed on. The insects' twitter charms the air. The sun gilds the tufts of grass and the tree twigs, to a gladness exquisite, ineffable. By night, the moonbeams broaden, and stretch themselves to touch its innermost nook. But no human voice is heard there. No mortal eye glances there. No house, no tilth, no foundry nor factory, no ax nor hammer, shall invade that secret haunt of God.

The earth has always retained such mystic charms, and always will, to enhance its outer beauties. They are God's reserves. So in this life of soul, there must be velvety enclosures, and pauses of retreat, from man, from self, from work and sound, from road and path, from all but God. This is a vital law of silence. It determines, as we are next to see, the vitality of action. For true spiritual motion, beginning from within and from above, begins only when, reticent to that about it, the heart obeys the impulses that touch it only then.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SOUL STIRS.

**SPIRIT-FLUSH.—SUDDEN ILLS.—DEATH ALWAYS SUDDEN.—OLD TREE.—FALLS OF CHARACTER.—SOPHISTICAL CONSOLATION.—FINAL IMPULSE OF PROCESS.—THE MAGNET.—DAYLIGHT.—YOUNG LOVE.—REGENERATE LIFE IN ITS DISCLOSURE.—CHRIST'S MINISTRY MARKED BY SUDDEN COMPLIANCES.—NO OTHERS ENDORSED IN SCRIPTURE RECORD.—SUDDEN ACHIEVEMENTS.—ART OF PRINTING.—SIR ISAAC NEWTON.—COLUMBUS.—DEFECT IN REJECTION OF THIS FORCE.—THE CONSERVATIVE TREE BOUGH.—MANIFOLD IMPULSES.—IMPULSE A COUPLER OF PHASES.—SMILES AND TEARS LIKE SUNSHINE AND SHOWERS.—LIFE DRIED UP.—GOING TO SEA.—YOUNG CHILDREN PUT TO SLEEP WITH THE AGED.—STIFF PORTRAIT OF MINISTRY.—MADE MUSIC.—ROOTS AND FLOWERS.—LIFE AN IMPULSE.—HAWSEES.—THE SUDDEN TRANSFER.**

**T**HERE is a genuine suddenness in all true life. There is the flash of truth, as there is the flash of light. There is the flush of spirit, as there is the flush of face. It may be a hectic confessed. It may be a health, a glow. The spirit's look can mantle with instinctive blushes. It can also sparkle with fiery glances. It is an element of sacred life. God's power in the soul of man, like God's power in his physical frame, springs it to nervous action, by enkindling it with electric sensibility. We may note in the first place, that the stir of renovation in the character begins as a sudden impulse.

We all believe in sudden ills; in catastrophes alike

passive and active. For most men, life picks its way through chances, as a pedestrian through the thoroughfare. It must look up the street and down the street, lest it be overrun. A man has been known to become a skillful swimmer by long practice, and save other lives; yet, seized with a cramp spasm, to be drowned in shallow water, and within reach of boats.

An aged minister, a quiet, cautious, most domestic man, was heard to preach upon the text, There is but a step between me and death. But he could not have anticipated, nor could his loving hearers, the literal interpretation which a few days fulfilled, that after having passed safely through casualties, epidemics and alarms, he should stumble from his own window-sill, and by a single misstep fracture his skull and die.

Now, for the most part we discriminate what are called sudden deaths from what is called death by course of nature. But in point of fact, all death is sudden. It is the course of nature coming to an unnatural halt. However sluggishly the works, the wheels of that time-piece within your breast be moving, at last hours—they still move. However low and weak and dying you may be—you still live. Death is a simultaneous check, and obstinate stiffness of refusal. There is a jerk and jar in the idea, as when a train of cars is forced to stop, and in proportion to

the length of the train is the jarring shock. And it is just as hard to get out of the idea of life while you are alive, as to get out of a car while it runs. Death is a surprise to every man, and every man dies suddenly.

We all believe in sudden sins and crimes.

There is, it is true, a law of moral growth. Character will grow as the body grows even in sleep. Character that seems dead will grow, as the face changes in the coffin, and the hair grows in the grave.

But there are events in the life of spirit terribly distinct. Many a man, whose affairs were out of order, becomes suddenly bankrupt by one wild and tempting speculation. And so, many a nature that was wavering, is ruined by a single seduction.

An old tree stood by the roadside, overhanging a house. Its branching arms once stretched to shelter. At length they stretched to threaten. Men saw that it was hollow. Men said that it would fall. But who could tell the strength of the next wind? One day its stoutest bough with a crashing blow felled the roof. Many a bowing wall has stood in the tempest, and then fallen in the stillness of an evening. So it is with human proclivity. We need not forget that there may be bad character where there is good conduct; but presently it shakes itself into disastrous, fatal conduct. The trunk of it that stood badly, comes lumbering down,—blinding dust and mis-

erable rubbish. There are falls of the soul; they may have been rapids, on their way, but they had not found their precipice.

A few hours ago the youth was only wild and wayward; he had no more thought of crime yesterday than we have to-day. And yet the fell tribunal, the awful gazing, the prurient curiosity, the photograph of infamy, the thick blackness of the cell, the shudders of unhoping hope, the anguish of fear, the ignominy and the whole relentless doom are his, as if conceived, contrived for him alone. High-spirited lad, he had been—favorite with many, safe from all. Felon he is, execrate, or pitied,—either to infamy and despair.

What if a person, overtaken by some sudden pain or peril, refuse to accept the fact; what if he say, This can not be much after all. This will not last, it is too impetuous. Or if a moralist approach one in the shock and shiver of a conscious guilt, with this salvo;—Friend, you have committed a theft, but be not rash to pronounce yourself dishonest. Impulses rarely last, excitement effervesces, passionate purpose will soon be quenched. You will presently rebound to rectitude. Yet in this style many religionists check the better impulses of men, the younger impulses of children. It is the restraint which many a man puts on himself in sacred progress. As if the way of grace, the way of glory were such a down-hill way, such a

precipitous declivity, that salvation must depend on screwing hard the brakes. But there is a legitimate tremor of the nerves and straining of the muscles in the starts of purpose. Even where there have been graduate, preliminary, and subtle growth, there must be a plunge at length.

You have noticed a magnet holding a needle motionless as if it were impotent, inert. But suddenly the needle twitched to one side, and sprang to the secret power. It had been attracted all the time, but at once was so alive to law, as to be animate with purpose. A bud is softening and swelling all the time in spring. Presently petals are unfurled, each to its proper distance—each in its ripened tint. It flowers, you say, into flower.

It is so in other magnetism and in other blooms. True love of young hearts draws long in silence, and lies motionless, as if unconscious. It is long a silent growth, a misunderstood understanding. All at once, impetuously, heart touches heart, and life clings, grows, to life. The hard, green, close bud of sentiment, becomes the enriching and exhaling flower of confidence. The lighting of a room, or of a day, must be gradual, for every atom of the atmosphere must be touched. Yet all light comes in a flash. The day breaks all at once. The stars come out fast.

This principle characterizes sacred story. Each discipleship in the personal ministry of Jesus was

instantaneous in its disclosure. Regeneration may have been slow in its unconscious growth. Regenerate life revealed its new birth by its tiny cry, before it could speak. Matthew sat in his office, in the custom-house, up to his eyes in business. The Master said, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. He called off Peter, James and John, with their fishing coats on, in the fresh smell of the tar. He took Andrew and Philip into the church, when they only came to look at the church. They came to see what sort of man he was. He showed them what they were, and what they might become. He did not wait to reach the centurion's house, but healed his servant by the way. He dispensed his healing virtue, so that the poor creature who touched his garment's hem need not detain him. The day of Pentecost was not a culminated argument, but a tremendous excitement. It was not a philosophic era—it was a fiery revival. It was not like a college of discussion—it was like a Methodist meeting. Men were pricked in their hearts, as by a stab of conscience. They were promptly comforted. Saul fell to the earth a shuddering partisan bigot. He rose up a docile Christian. The jailor sprang up, and called for a light to kill himself. He stepped back to his house to be baptized. The Ethiopian took his seat in his chariot a Jewish proselyte. He stepped out of his chariot to be initiated a Christian. There



is no single instance in Scripture narrative of a sudden compliance, which proved to be a spurious compliance. On the other hand, there is no single instance of a wary and precautionous approach to God, which is not an instance of unsuccessful, or at least of partial undertaking. No instance is there of a man's waiting to consider a clear duty, or lingering to prepare for it, in which it was not left undone, or done feebly. The heart either never came back, or it came back timid, dull, and spiritless. This statement will surprise many. The fact is more astounding. Look through inspired biography. Mark Balaam, the tamperer. Mark Saul, the temporizer. Mark Rehoboam, the waverer. Mark Hezekiah when he was the time-server. Mark Job's friends, the reasoners. Mark Nicodemus, the night inquirer. Mark the young ruler, the bargainer. Mark Pilate, the equivocator. Mark Herod, the conscience fearer. Mark Felix, the trembler. Mark Agrippa, the half believer.

Compare these with registered instances of swift trust and absolute submission. It is so at this hour. Men who have always thought of these things—think and think, and live and die thinking men. They doubt and think every night upon their beds. They will think and doubt upon their death beds. Upon the very bier, the upturned brow, the silent, marble clay will wear that look of doubtful thought.

All achievements for the cause of God, the good of

man, must have an impulsive ardor—the freshness and the force of suddenness, however long has been their preparation or their contemplation. The inception of any truth is an emergency. It was an electric thought which bounded in the brain when the wooden moulds which had been used, as children use their toys, to stamp impressions on the playing cards that they might be told apart in gambling, became the printing power which now rules the world, which now publishes the Bible. The Art of Printing had been long prepared—the Art of Printing has been long improved, but that was the birth hour of an infant which has become the giant Hercules of all human work, the Hercules king of all human renown.

Sir Isaac Newton, thinker as he was, lay listlessly day dreaming under the apple tree, and the falling apple, for which the breezes had been registered and tutored in the skies, revealed to him the law of gravitation and this planetary scheme.

Many voyagers had tried to find a new continent. But the hope of nations yet to be, the hope of ages, lay lifeless until Christopher Columbus stepped upon the quarter deck.

Character is defective, and development fails in the rejection of this force. It is the lack of faith in heavenly impetus which makes so many good causes stagger, and so many purposes stagnate. There is a

spiritual momentum. Inertia is a law of soul. But men distrust the one, and disobey the other.

A heavenly suggestion stirs in the breast. Ah, says the man, if this would only last. Just now I could pray. I feel that I could work. I could face the world. I could sacrifice much. I may not yield to it now. This is excitement. This must be examined. I must be clearer. I must look at all sides. And before he knows where he is, the breath of heaven has gone, the life within him is suppressed.

It is as if a branch should steady itself against the freshening breeze, because its roots are in the soil, and lean stiffly back, waiting until the force should conquer its whole rigid trunk, or bear it to the ground, refusing the passing excitement, the bending liteness of its boughs, for fear of a reaction. Never so would it grow. Never so would any fragrance from that tree be caught upon the breeze and borne upon the air, for man's refreshment or for nature's gladness. Rather give your balm of thought to every requiring breath of heaven and to every passing call of life.

Heaven's impulses stir to us, and ought to keep us always stirring like the leaves. They come over us when we walk the fields. They touch us in the solitary woods. They sing to us in the sounding of the waves. They hush us in the crystal stillness of a winter's scene. They muse in us at a friend's grave. They whisper in the pause of care. They soothe us in

the interval of toil. They stroke our brows in anguish. They sweep athwart us in the pauses of the sanctuary. We would have men heed them and receive them. Let the man of business give way to his impetuous longing for an hour in the grove, and go there if but for an hour. Let the usurped life, which seems to have no self-control, but to be engrossed by outer facts, repose for that one crystal moment, if for that moment alone. Let the brave, the daring thought do the venturesome deed, the noble deed, which in cool blood it could not do, while gaping mouths bid it forbear, and outstretched hands would hold it back; just as the sailor mounts the rigging, just as the fireman climbs the burning house wall. The impulse shall be the strength. Do it now. You can not do it afterwards. They who deride the undertaking will praise the exploit. What the present called impossible, the future shall only call wonderful.

There is no truer law on this earth than the trite maxim, Nothing venture, nothing have. In God's dialect the same law reads, He that believeth not shall be damned. Unless a man take advantage of some propelling power in good, he will be left to the propulsions of ill. The interior constitution of the human body recognizes this same law. The throb of the heart is convulsive. The motion of the pulse is a bounding motion.

Opportunities, like eggs, must be hatched when they are fresh.

The showers from heaven must be caught as they fall. Most men build shelving roofs to let them off. Sacred pleasures, like fruits, must be picked from the tree to get the genuine flavor. Stale juices are distasteful and unwholesome.

Procrastinated effort from good intents is like fasting when you are hungry, and over eating when you are faint. Giddiness and indigested life ensue, chronic distempers and bewildering infirmity.

The only way to wait on God's Providence, is as boatmen wait upon the tide, to take it when it comes, lest it leave you on the sand. The only way to wait for God's grace, is as sailors wait the breeze. The spirit is a wind that bloweth where it listeth. Expand the heart to his favoring gale, and let him fill the sail.

Then thrust out your hand to the beggar when he stands before you. Give him bread, and while he eats it, give him condiment of good advice. Take the poor prodigal home again, and when his dripping clothes are dry, and when his panting breast is soothed to peace, ask him whence he comes and whither he goes. Let the tear of penitence that gushes in your eye course down your cheek, unhindered, unashamed. Speak the forgiving, reconciling word while it is moist and pliant. Kneel and

pray when the first, faint thought of prayer is flushing you. Listen to the sermon while it speaks, and to the good cause while it pleads, to the church bell while it rings, to heaven while it rustles, and to angels while they sing.

This mood of impulse is the coupler of life's phases, at once delicate and strong to regulate their valves of interchange—opening one to close another, and sometimes blending all.

True faith is a life of smiles and tears, such as children lead—a childlike life. For we are children here. So long as man's life is beneath the sky, it can have joy, and it must have doubts, as the face of the earth must have clouds and sunshine. Sunshine is blessed, but the earth withers in its constant clasp. Showers are refreshing, but the life of nature droops and shivers when it showers all the time. What the landscape asks is a sunshine refreshed by showers—a shower that remembers sunshine. And while the human soul is below the firmament of glory, it must have hopes and fears. It must be drenched and saturate with doubt, that fills its roadside pools, that it may bask in broadening beams of truth.

There are some who have checked the impulse of smiling till they can smile no more. You see that they have lost the use of that muscle, the fibre of that nerve. If they attempt it, they achieve a melancholy grin, and sepulchral twist of mouth.

Their smile is more sardonic, more oppressive than their frown. There is no dimple in their lives. There are who have learned to check their tears, and practiced it until their eyes are dry. Back in their secret souls there is a bubbling spring. It gurgles faintly and at lower ebb. It is a sealed well. Men do them injustice. They do themselves injustice. Their eyes stare, or else they only blink. They are sad to see. Yet few see their sadness, their unseen desolateness, and their wastes of arid life.

There are many who are tending to these rigidities and stolidities of life, through dread of spiritual impulses.

If a smile be playing on their consciousness, they say, Why should one smile? He shall have to cry to make amends for it. If a tear be trickling, they check it, abashed, saying, we are unworthy to shed tears; it does not become us. So they are drying up all around us, and stiffening like fossil life within the stones.

If such a man have done wrong, he says, I have done wrong. I must go on doing it. I can not be a hypocrite. If he have gone away from God, and in a pettishness or spiritual pout he is wandering up and down outside, he says, with an aching heart, I must walk thus until they come after me. I dare not step back into God's house. Many a heart, like many a boy, because it has some trouble in its sweet home, deserts its father's

roof, and goes off to sea, never to live on solid land again.

If such an one have a quarrel against any, though he love and long, he will not speak, and lest he should be thought to be too tender, he does many little foolish things, to show how hard he is.

There are many lives about us, spiritual lives, that are wrinkled; cadaverous and gray before their time, and sink in premature decays. Holy impulses pass them and stir them not. Heavenly dews reach them not. They are wrapped up in wisdom. They are covered over with concealing care.

There are who treat their young faith—and all faith in this world is young,—as some unwise parents treat their children, putting them to sleep, night after night, with very aged people. The old draw nurture from the young, and hold life a little longer,—a very little. But the children become wan and weak, and checked in the impulses of growth and the electric currents of their tenderness, look very wise and very old a little; then droop away.

There is a portrait of a minister which is a picture of much religion in its ministry among men. He is drawn in stiff and angular posture, standing before a Bible open at one place only, with one finger held steadfastly in stern admonition; as if no touch of reminiscence, no tracery of tenderness, no impulse of further reach should ever stir it, and no lofty hope lift it



higher. A child who stood in the room exclaimed, It drives me crazy. And there is many a room of life in which such a religion is pictured—many a heart in which such a ministry is portraitured. There is no partial view of God's truth, no unlimber and inconsiderate temper of God's service, which does not craze some soul, and disfigure and disgrace God's house.

Made lives and made arrays of Christian work are like music ground out from a barrel organ. How much sweeter sounds the very same familiar strain, when it comes bounding from the finger touches of a genius.

There is no need to be tedious in order to be true. There is no need to be timorous in order to be wise. There is no need to be tardy in order to be thorough.

Principle is to impulse what roots are to flowers. It may lie there long concealed. It germs and lives, when the leaf withers and the stalk crumbles, and the ground is hard and cold. But it will flower sometimes. What would one think of a man who should go boasting that his garden ground was full of roots, but of roots too deep for showy shootings on the surface? Ah, says he, my roots are too rare, too deep, too permanent, for such surface work and growth in one short summer! But there are lives of men, so desperately set, so deeply buried in what they call their general principles, that they must have God's summers lengthened, and God's

bright, balmy days confused, before they can ever show God's praise in herbage, or God's glory in bloom.

After all, this life itself is an impulse in Eternity. It is but a moment. It is to be seized. It is to be claimed. The longest planning, the maturest ripening, are a moment's spring in the grand space of everlasting life.

There is a panting which is of health. There is a holy restlessness in Christian life. These life ties and these life restraints, that seem to check and hold and stay our spirits, are hawsers—hawsers that make us fast here, while we bound and pitch at these wharves and these anchors, to go farther and still farther. There is another anchorage—there is another port. Every life-leap bestirs itself for heaven. Let the vessel rock—it is its build, its nature. You call it restlessness. Rather call it buoyancy. Rather call it trimness.

You see a poor human bark eager to find the sky. It prances on the waves, and it dips to the foam, and it knocks against the shore. It is because it was made to sail afar. Give it some helm. Give it some compass and some chart. Give it a pilot and a port, then let it go. You see a poor, weak, mourning soul coming up and glistening with joy. Its sins are all forgiven. Its curse chain is splintered into shreds. Its shudders hush to peace. God's arm that was lifted up to smite it, stretches out to save it, and to guide

it and to welcome it. God's voice, that thundered over it, now speaks to it in a father's tone. God's glance, that flashed and lightened at it, now beams with love. It stood outside, emigrant, beggared, forlorn. It stands at home. That was the grace impulse. Presently you see a further revolution. It is the last bound. Ye see a poor, jaded pilgrim coming home to glory. The long, long way is past. The sharp, rude cliffs are scaled. The trials are forgotten. The perils are all escaped. The weariness is rested. It looks like a dream. It looks as if he had never been apart from heaven. Yet it was a moment's change. Just now skill stood at his bedside, trying to nurse him here and stay him here. Just now friendship held out arms of white tenderness and of ruby, roseate love, to hold him back from home. Just now the spirit struggled in a dusty doorway. Smothered if it staid, yet not allowed to go. Just now it feared and panted to come home. Now it is on the bank of the river. Now it is in rest, in joy, in glory evermore. That was the impulse of glory.

## CHAPTER X.

### COMMON LIFE.

UNCOMMON RELIGION.—GENIUS SOUL.—ASCETICISM UNNATURAL.—A LIFE-LONG FUNERAL.—FORMALISM.—MISTAKE OF RECKONING.—TIPTOE THOUGHT.—COMMON GLORY OF GOD IN NATURE.—THE CATARACT.—CREATION A FACTORY.—SUNRISE ON TRIFLES.—PROVIDENTIAL DIFFUSION.—THE TEACHER LOOKING AFTER HIS CLASS, ONE BY ONE.—EVERY DAY LIFE REDEEMED.—THE FATHER LOOKING AFTER HIS CHILDREN.—CONSECRATED WORK.—MUSIC.—POETRY.—STRENGTH.—FELLOWSHIP.—PARTING.—SHELLS.

THAT far reach of soul which establishes the harmony between its present and its uttermost future, dignifies all common life, and invests little things with greatness, as the drop is sphered by the same law that rounds the globe.

Uncommon Religion is, for the most part, a failure on this common earth. The religion which can not be ours in ordinary, can not be ours in fact. There doubtless is, here and there, a genius soul. There are eccentric Christians, as well as eccentric men. It is likely that there are poets among the angels, and artists among the saints. But to mimic them will no more render us sacredly unique, than to put on a turban would constitute one an oriental sage, or to hack and scar your frame would render you a veteran.

Asceticism is one style of unnatural faith. An observer of it, says within himself, If this sackcloth life be worn for self, it is a terse selfishness. For every funeral is entitled to its hour, but to make a life-long funeral for yourself, and to summon all your neighbors to attendance on it, and to block the way with a persistent hearse, is quite unreasonable. To lie in state in this way, is most pernicious where sin is malignant and sorrow epidemic.

The observer says again, If this craped look of spirit be for the world at large, it is unseemly, because a Redeemer has arrived, and is now in the world. It is like wrapping up in sables, and cowering over the hearth-stone, when May blooms are all about you.

One says, at last, If this plaintive aspect be for Christ's sake, it is untimely, because the angels were dressed in white that sat, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

Again, Formalism, of every style, is also unnatural, whether of creed, of worship, or of practice. It is odd enough, and painful, to hear men talk of addressing the throne of grace. It is exquisitely absurd to see a group fantastically robed, and mechanically drilled, bowing and curtsying to yonder glory. But whatever be the aspect of unnaturalness, its secret is single. It is an attempt to give God something more or something less, than our common, simple lives.

There are those who so separate their life here in

its plainness, from their hereafter in its splendor, that the former seems too cheap and paltry to beseeem the latter. They have such overwhelming views of God, that they can not bear to come before him in their every day attire. They would like to be spiritual always, and to spend more time in prayer. Whatever they do in outer life, is so much subtracted from their life of soul. Whenever they look down upon the ground, they reproach themselves for not looking up into the sky. They would stand on tiptoe all the time to be nearer heaven. But their toes slip, and their hands hang down.

Now in the vast ranges of God's common glory, man's common life is redeemed and ennobled. Infinite beauty is not to be likened to finite magnificence, as if it rested in comparisions. It knows no gradations. It measures no distances. It employs no relative greatness. In a sense, God does nothing little. In a sense, nothing great. It is idle to dream that eternal life is a gala day, a holiday, a carnival—that heaven is an insipid spectacle. Splendor of the whole is real, only when it is brilliance of the parts.

Among men, that only is grand which is rare. A thing must be costly to be valuable.

Taste is so perverted that we are only moved by that which is in contrast with common life.

In a life so contracted, there are many party givers who make spare and meager meals in ordinary. There

are dashy dresses that attract attention because they outshine the daily robes. Parlors there are that hide and deny shabbiness up stairs. There are painted bricks which counterfeit stone arches. There are make believe spires that do not have an architectural growth, but a mechanical forcing.

Nature discloses no such principle in the glory of God.

Creation never suffers in one part for the ornament of another. No lavish expenditure or overload degrades it. Not by vastness of the aggregate, but by individual perfections he makes beauty. Each little thing has its own exquisite finish. Each least creature is as radiant with the glow of his make, as smooth and as beveled by the tracery of his touch, as the greatest. There is, to be sure, an additional power, and there is an enhanced beauty in the enlargement of his works, and in their multiplication and harmonious concurrence. But the truth of them contrasts with the shabbiness of a spurious display, in this, that the lower you go, the more singly you take them up, the more perfect they are, *i. e.*, the more of their individual perfection you are able to take in.

There is no covering over. There are no lumber rooms. There are no cobweb corners. There are no crudities. There are no abortions. There is no skillful grouping of uncomely things into postures of comeliness. There is no tinsel to bedeck. There is

no falsity. There is no necessary concealment. It may be a stately spectacle which confronts you, of a rushing cataract. But it is not an illusion of physical drama. It is not a stage effect—a scenic pomp gotten up for such a purpose. It is not a child's play for the universe. And the reason is, that the single drop dashed by the spray on your face, is more wondrous in its secret construction. It taxes your study more. It is more original in the glory of God. You say in yourself,—He who could make this drop, could very easily make this cataract. The wonder is how the drop was made. The worth is that the drop is made.

So the leaf is as much a revelation of God as the forest.

Put the eye to the telescope and sweep the circles of heaven; then take in your hand a microscope and study an insect's wing, or the cells of a plant. It will be like entering a factory, with its long-drawn departments. Creation is a factory, and not an arcade. It is not a cheap, trumpery fair, nor an enticing store with dazzling counters and glittering show cases.

The lower you go, and the further you go, the nearer you come to elemental skill and care. It is not the finishing off alone which has glory. It is the fabricating. The grooved and framed specimens are no more on display, nor are the tacked and coupled completions, than the first pieces that are cut and shaped



—the little pieces that go to make up the rest. You will find the foreman in every room, but most of all in this. It is so in the factory of God. It is so in the jewelry shop of his glory.

When the sun is mounting up in day, it is not the vast rolling orb that is most distinct to you—it is not the lustrous atmosphere. It is the sun streak on your carpet, the sun smile on your wall. Or if you are walking, you see a singular tinting of things. The homely fence looks comely—the dark little pool glimmers and gleams—the minnow sporting in the ray warms with an agile gladness. On the sill of the barn door the coming noon makes its mark. By the road-side the plain flower opens its petals. The single stalk of grain burnishes among its thousands. The single things, the little things, are glad to glorify God.

The same law holds in the sphere of Providence.

That vastness of the Divine Being which might be a desolation to us, becomes a consolation in the distributive method of Divine relation. To think of the Infinite as he is in himself, must make any man a hopeless skeptic. To think of the Infinite as he comes to his creatures, ought to make every man a practical saint.

There might be a general law of provision for creatures, which while it established the wisdom and goodness of their Maker, should put them at a distance from him.

We might readily imagine the fullness of supply consigned to a central depot, and that while God attended to the wants of the creation at large, every creature should secure for itself out of that supply, and regulate its own life. The Almighty might thus discharge his office and disburse his bounty, at the same time casting off the care of lesser creatures, and dismissing individuals from his attention, because of their insignificance. But there is no such disposition manifest. There is no such depot built. There is no such law passed. There is no order of the weather in the seasons. There is a succession of day and night. But there is no telling what a day will bring forth. The beast is not sure of his prey, nor the bird of his life, nor the plant of its juices. These *wait* all upon thee.

He might have delegated the charge of creatures, each rank to that above it. He might have bidden angels take care of nations and kings—kings of people—as was once supposed—and men of animals, reserving himself and secluding himself in the august and impersonal conduct of things. So earthly governors do. You are not in fellowship with your ruler. Few subjects ever speak to their king. In that case, the less the creature, the less to God. A trifling act could give him no praise. But it is not thus at all.

There is not a creature, not an animal, that stands as close to its nearest fellow-creature, as it stands to

Divine personality. The parent bird leaves its young brood at God's feet. He teaches them to fly. A child finds out its own soul. Its claim on a father in heaven is clearer and stronger than its relation to a father on earth.

Every creature has a God nigh to it. Every creature comes before God. Every character of a creature, every act, is something to him. He is as a teacher who is not content to gather his school or his classes before him, but heeds each one in his place, shedding a favor or a frown. Each one stands up before God to recite the lesson of time.

In this way, then, does he prize his common glory in man's every day life. He who has taught us to pray, not in one grand concentrated epoch of religious endeavor, but in daily prayer, has taught us to worship in a daily holiness. He has taught us to hallow his name, not over our fast, but over our food.

He has taught us to say,—Give us this day our daily bread,—that he may teach us to glorify him in our daily acknowledgment. He who has made the little bird lift up its head in the piety of exquisite pleasure when it sips at the brook, has taught us to drink the cup of a richer thanksgiving.

There is a higher reason of this in the scheme of the gospel. For that is only the culminating of immediate relation in Christ. The life of man, the common natural life of man, has been brought back to

the God who made it, who loves it. He made it wisely. He loves it dearly. He has thought it worth while to redeem it. He has thought it worth while to pay such a price as no tongue can tell. He has not bought up the dry bones of a dehumanized existence. He has not purchased slaves to lash. He has not touched us to shadows. He has bought us to live—to live here—to eat and to drink, and to do.

But now he cares vastly more than ever what we do.

We said that a teacher summons his class. But it is a father that summons his children. It is not a brief glance of assiduous discipline, not a close pressure of questioning tutorship which he casts upon them. We dwell in his house. The body as well as the spirit dwells in his house of redemption—not to live a disembodied unnatural life, but to cultivate a bodily holiness.

And how shall this be done? The answer is patent. Not by religious affectation. Not by earthly inaction. Not by getting out of ourselves. Not by perverting natural law. But by consecrating common life to God's common glory.

It is not to perform before the throne as a juggler performs before a king. It is not to rave and drivel unheeded in the universe, as you have noticed wandering minstrels playing their symphonies in the roar and rattle of business streets.

Work, even drudging work, can grow very beauti-

ful. The sod shall be an altar, and the plow handles shall be the altar horns. The smock frock glistens, a priestly vestment,—the smoking toil shall curl its incense round the very rafters of the firmament. Music need be neither ascetic-sacred, nor formal-sacred. It can be naturally sacred, guiding to touches of the utmost truth. Poetry can have free pass between heaven and earth. Study can measure planet realms and find this earth a planet, all twinkling in one firmament. Strength can run to help the helpless and to comfort the comfortless, thereby keeping by the side of God. Money can flow in shining, spangling, rivulets of joyous praise and all beneficence. Fellowship grows genial in the daylight of eternal day. Ties are the netted filaments of celestial fiber. Sorrow sits under the eaves of eternity to sun itself to joy, or goes gently to sleep within the curtains of serene reserves. Parting is but a pacing the piazza past each other back and forth, and wheeling in the circle of secure enclosure, to come again, a meeting joy.

There is a life, looking only before it, which has nothing behind. That is no better than death. There is a life which looks only around it, and has nothing beyond. That is death too. But there is a life which leaves its tokens of Hereafter in its traces of Here. That is life everlasting.

What mystic things are shells! One loves to gather

them, and muse upon their rare shapings and innumerable tints. Picking them out from their thousands by the sea-side, ask yourself, What are these? These praise God more than church towers do. They murmur a sweeter chime than church bells do, and that steadfastly. But these are the beautiful exuvæ, the deserted homes, of little lives. They are still cherished in their grace, and precious in their beauty. So he who is on high prizes these outer lives, strown here beneath his throne. And even when these spirits shall have stepped forth, vested anew, on further scenes, still along this ocean edge, amid the soundings of the sea sublime, tripping students yet to come, will prize the traces of creature insignificance, as precious beauties of his workmanship—shell specimens of his delicate and dainty work.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SPIRITUAL RECREATION.

PLEASURE DISTINGUISHED FROM HAPPINESS.—PUTTING LISTENERS TO SLEEP.—  
LAW OF HOLIDAY.—RECOGNIZED IN STELLAR SPACES.—SIDEREAL EVENT.—  
AUROREAL OCCASION.—ANGELIC ERAS.—THE SURF BATH OF BLISS.—LAW OF  
LOWER NATURE.—ANIMAL PLAY.—EXERCISE NEEDS SPORT.—LAW OF SAC-  
RED PLEASURE.—RELIGION OF PAIN.—IRKSOME RELIGION.—THE DRUDGE.—  
STEALTHY RECREATION.—EARTHLY ASPECT OF CHRISTIAN HAPPINESS.—HOLY  
LAUGH.—REPLY TO THE WORLDLING.—IN WHAT SENSE A CHRISTIAN NEVER  
RELEASED.—A SAILOR.—A SOLDIER.—THE RECESS AT SCHOOL.—MENAGERIE  
CHURCHES.—SELF GOADINGS.—ARID CHRISTIANITY.—NEW HOUSES WITHOUT  
SHRUBBERY.—CHRIST'S STRICTNESS AND INDULGENCE.—THE SITTING ON THE  
GRASS.—THE SLEEP IN THE SHIP, ETC.—SABBATH MISUNDERSTOOD.—NOT A  
RELIEF FROM SIN, BUT A REST IN RELIGION.—NOT GIVING GOD ONE DAY  
IN SEVEN.—APPOINTED WHEN ALL DAYS WERE HOLY.—HOW THE EARLY  
CHURCH KEPT IT.—JUBILANT EXERCISES.—THE SABBATIZED SHIP.—THE  
MILLENNIUM.—SABBATH VARIETIES.—EARTHLY RECREATIONS.—LOCUST  
CARES.—THE HARNESS EXCHANGED FOR THE SADDLE.—TRUE SABBATH  
KEEPING.—THE CLEAR-SPOT OF ETERNITY.

THERE is a restoration and an exaltation of human work. There is a redemption of human pleasure. A Christian is to have his recreations, as well as his duties. Pleasure is a law of life, in every form. There is no word so much abused. There is no theme so much confused. There are teachers in the church who claim happiness as an element of faith-life, but deny it pleasure. The former they believe to be capable of holiness and endurance. The latter has a sort of sin to them even in its sound.

Now there is an unquestionable difference between the two words, and between the two things for which they stand. Happiness is a state or condition general. It describes a complete view. Pleasure is an indulgence. It limits itself to some particular circumstance. A man may be happy in pain or in sorrow. But he can not have pleasure, except in that which is pleasant. A strong man is never happier than when he is in the thick of his work. But he has his pleasure in play, or in rest, or in some lighter pursuit involving a stop or at least a change of work. It is just as true a law in the spiritual constitution, as in the physical. Pleasure is opposed not only to pain; it is also in contrast with duty. The sacred man is happy in the service of God. He is happiest when he is doing the hardest work. He is never so happy as when he dies. Nor is any dying saint so happy, as the martyr in the very glow and crackle of the fire. But that is his hour of trial, and not his grant of indulgence.

And it is just at this point that men mistake religion. It is a notion so prevalent and so inveterate, as to be almost a matter of orthodoxy, that a religious soul is never to have any release from duty, any furlough from vigils, or any intermission of toil, until it reaches its ultimate state, and then is to have nothing but repose. There are many hymns that sing this, and discourage men, just as when you sing a doleful ditty to keep listeners awake, you put them asleep. This is the



notion that spoils prayer meetings and taints sermons. It makes some men shrink from their religion with dread. It makes other men dreadful in a shrunken religion.

The Law of Holiday is a law of our Nature. An adjustment of Holiday is an arrangement of life. The constitution of creatures is punctuated to pause, as much as the construction of sentences in language. And so, too, all measures of time that we know of have their odd remnants, their spare fragments, that are like rests in music. There is always time intercalated, as there are sheafs and handfuls for the gleaners which the reapers do not gather, or which drop from the loaded wain. If we give scope to conjecture, there is reason to believe, that there are festivals and gala days throughout the stellar ways, that must be chronicled among the stellar globes. The regular motions of orbit yield now and again to specialties of rare occasion. The moons that wax and wane on this planet, and on yonder planets, see planets now flickering and now refulgent on their view. The sun's change of place among the constellations seems to establish eras even in their splendors, and points and pauses in their history. And as to the lambent flushes, and the glory dashes that often irradiate the firmament, which the old weird notions of mankind took for tokens of terror, they are translated now into signals of the ages. The comet when it sweeps the sky

like the gleam of God's sword, is but the flourish of a pen that signatures the close of a celestial epoch. It is the nebulous joy, the festal occasion, of sidereal event. It is an atmospheric rhapsody, a firmamental ecstasy. And yet it takes its measured, regulated turn.

It will be clear that there is great liberty and leisure, and large recreation, in the upper spheres of this universe, if you search the Scriptures. There is reason to suppose that lofty spirits have great latitude of indulgence and many occasions for celebration, though they can never be said to be idle.

It is quite apparent that whatever be the sea of joy in which beatific spirits bathe, it has its swell of motion and its breaking, foaming surf of high occasions. To dash in those surf-crests of joy is to their angelic excellence of strength, a pleasure over and beyond the rippling flow of their even bliss. It is in this way that bliss itself can be diversified without being interrupted. It can be constant without being stagnant or monotonous.

This fact in regard to them is not a matter of conjecture. We know that that was a great day on high, which celebrated the building of this globe from chaotic smoulderings. Then the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. We know that that is to be a crisis of triumph, which is the manifestation of the sons of God.

We know that at the incarnation of Immanuel,

when the decree went out,—and let all the angels of God worship him,—there appeared a great multitude of the heavenly host praising God,—as on a gala parade.

Now, if we step back to this life which comes under our cognizance, we find that pleasure is one of its essential provisions. We find, too, that incidental and excursive pleasure, pleasure that finds occasions and reliefs from the ordinary conditions of life, be those conditions what they may, is everywhere recognized as a wholesome law. Play is a necessity of growth. It is the ply of some nerves and muscles which otherwise would be inactive. The young lamb needs his skipping step. The baby needs his baby leaps and laughs and crows. The boy is the better for his games. The young are stronger for their romps. And whatever be said against these things in their abuses, man's need of exercise is something more than his need of work. To strain the sinews and to knit the frame is not all the exercise he needs. He must have pleasure, and the glow, the tingle of relaxation. No creature is made without reference to this law. The insect chirps in the grass. The bird twitters on the twig. The cock crows. The man in his prime must have pleasure in his walk or ride, or it will do him no good.

Some have assumed exercise itself, studious mechanical motion, to be the requisite. And they often wonder why it does not avail to retain or restore their

health. Sedentary men, who force themselves to long, drear walks, or tasks of labor, and invalids that endure to be jerked, and jolted, for the purpose of invigoration, have found it a vain notion. The zest, the festivity, that forget self and stirs life's juices to an effervescence, alone repairs the wastes of nature. Scripture condescends to this hint when it says,—Bodily exercise profiteth little,—but godliness with contentment has great gain. Now there is a sacred pleasure, which is just as essential to soul health and strength, for lack of which many a soul droops and pines. We find it omitted in some styles of religion.

There is the religion of pain, which courts and cherishes heaviness of heart for its own sake. A man often takes large pride in fostering the sorrows of his conscience, mistaking penance for repentance, just as some invalids pique themselves on their peculiar symptoms. The charm of self inflictions and spiritual lacerations, as has been seen, can lurk in Protestantism as subtly as in Romanism.

There is an irksome piety, which undertakes its work of necessity, and transforms the spirit to a drudge,—a drudge that rejects every recreation, and yet grudges work. In some such cases the soul gets to be listless in its motions and inane in its life. It resembles at last a clerk at his desk, a servant of all work, who has narrowed his thoughts and his habits, and become set in his ways, and with crooked

form and wrinkled face trudges the usual routine exactly, but is neither ready for a sudden summons, nor intelligent of any other sphere. In some such cases the heart takes its pleasure apart from its religion, because its religion admits of no pleasure. It steps out now and then to have an illicit, paroxysmal indulgence, which is most disastrous. The man who lives in religious formulas and rigidities, and has need to go forth for his pleasures, is like a prisoner let out to get the fresh air. He will run away if he can. He is like a youth too strictly ruled at home, and denied all pleasure there. He will play the wildest and weakest pranks out of sight. A forced and formal sanctity, a harsh and crabbed sanctimony, that frowns on enjoyment of soul, often proves to real holiness what enforced celibacy has been to real purity—a temptation and a corruption.

A Christian happiness has its earthly content. A child of God is therefore not unfitted for society upon the earth. There is such a thing for him as festivity, as hilarity. A laugh can be a very holy thing, as it can be the hatefulest thing beneath the sun. It can be a ripple of praise to God and love to man, as it can be a growl of God defiance, a spasm of mortal hatred. It can be the sparkle of God's countenance upon the breast—as the green fields shine in the broad beams when the sky is blue. It can be an idiotic grin.

There is domestic pleasure and there is domestic

comfort under the roof which curls its smoke of incense to the throne. There is hearty cheer in the social group that congratulate each other on a broken curse and death's defeat.

When the gay votaries of folly and fashion assure us that religion does not consist in long faces and sour looks, in nasal tones and grim seclusions, we ought to be able to reply that for this very reason we are no votaries of fashion or of folly. It is because we have found in our own religion something better and brighter than even the mirth and the joy of this life. It is because we have discovered that happiness does not consist in envious sighs and jealous whispers, in poison air and dizzy whirlings over a floor, in chucklings over the chances and the fates involved in little bits of pasteboard—in the flash of the hot wine which has hurried so many brave bodies to the grave's edge, and set so many noble souls on everlasting fire,—in the charms of a finished manner which finishes a rounder, smoother lie, and makes selfishness outshine love, as brass outshines the virgin gold—in tedious conversation upon the state of nothing, and mincing small talk and tricky games that children weary of, and lavish trifles, at which the poor sigh ; while necessitous causes are told that times are hard, not in the dresses that disfigure, and the dresses that deceive, the morrows of ennui, the days of disgust, the coming years of wrinkles and of imbecile old age.

To rejoice with them that do rejoice, is not to mock with them that mock, nor to reel and stagger with a reeling, staggering throng, nor yet to practice days of care, and suffer nights of pain for a midnight merriment, taking the exhilarating ether to enjoy the frenzy of its laughter.

There is, it is true, a sense in which a Christian is never released from his watch or relieved from his work. He is never to be any thing else than a converted man. But he is not always in the same process of conversion. He is never to be off his guard. But he is not always to be in a state of alarm. He is a sailor in the bark of life. But he is not always reefing the sails, or holding hard the helm. He is a soldier who has no discharge while the war lasts. But he is not always dusty and hot in the march. He is not always in the trench. He is sometimes in camp. The tent is just as much a soldierly, martial place, as the field. But it is a different place. He is a child at school, and never goes home in all this term time—never goes home till he graduates. But he has intermissions and beautiful moments of exhilarated thought, coming in to his lessons at the tap of duty, with red, glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes.

There are some churches that revive only when they are stirred up. For the most part, the life of their members is a sort of menagerie life, as if they were caged and contained in the church for exhibition, when they

would like to be roaring with passion and roaming in lawlessness. There they lie, with their heads down and their tongues protruded in a listless wagging, all nerveless, dreary and forlorn, until some gay-robed exhibitor, bearing a flag of his own—some fancy preacher, steps jauntily into the ring to stir them up, and then the dismal spot resounds with dismal life—and that they call revival.

And some men have an idea that they can do no Christian service unless they are goaded and punctured to it. They must be compunctious in their exercises, or they do not think they are earnest. They must be spectral, or they do not consider themselves spiritual. That alone is a faithful ministry or a faithful fellowship, they think, which harasses them and pushes them on, and hurries their life work. They do it for themselves. When they begin to do a work for Christ, they say to each other, and to their own souls, Now then cherish a wholesome fear that you will never finish this, and so avoid presumption. Cherish the thought that the time is too short, or you will work too pleasantly. When you are doing this or that, make it a matter of self-reproach that you are not doing something else. And the instant you draw your breath, take heed lest you have squandered a moment of Eternity.

This class of persons hope to keep their faith alive by incessant alarm of doubt, and their love warm by



incessant admonition of coldness. They would keep a fire burning by sprinkling it with water.

But a Christianity that excludes pleasure, is an arid, repulsive Christianity. The stiff zeal of some new-born souls, what they call their devotions — their exclusiveness, and sharp, angular pietism, is like the trimness of some new houses, with the outlines all vivid, and the finish all glittering fresh. But there is something lacking, you see at a glance. Something which only time can bestow with its mellowing touches. There is no shrubbery around the door. There is no arbor in the garden. Christians that have had experience, know how to let their spiritual defenses twine around them, in sacred beauty and in home-like refreshment. It would be better if all such would plant more shrubbery and let more roses grow in their grounds, their acres of the gospel. Perhaps their religion would not be so conspicuous from the road, but it would be less dusty and desolate.

There never was a sterner faithfulness of ministry than Christ's own ministry in the days of his flesh. No class of students ever had a teacher so searching, so critical, as those first disciples. He spared not a touch of the truth. And yet, you see not a trace in all his ministry of hardness or an uncompassionate rigor. His tones were often thunder that could shake the heart. His tones were often music that could still the very bosom-bounds to ecstasy of calm. He provides rare

treats for them by the lake side, and on the mountain slope. That sitting on the grass—one must think more of that portrait of Christ. It is the one we would like to have in hours of soul weariness. That sleep of his on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship, should quiet our drowsy fears. That sitting at meat with Martha and Mary. That reception of the alabaster box. That indulgence so discriminating, so tender,—sleep on now and take your rest. That feast of the passover in the upper room. That considerateness that grew and unfolded more and more, when in his own risen humanity he could never again feel weariness or languor, as he came to their side, and like a provident and tender mother inquired, Children, have ye here any meat? Draped and shadowed as those scenes are by the sad hours of his trial and the pensive hours of his parting, they are no less testimonies of his care for the cheerfulness of his people, and his satisfaction in their repose. And to-day, when his joy is the joy of eternal victory, his will is that his joy may be in us, and that our joy may be full. His shadow must be our delight.

Consider the Sabbath day as a provision of celestial pleasure in this life. It is the type, the representative of all rare occasions. It is the interruption, not of man's worldliness by holiness, but of man's holy work by holy rest. A worldly, selfish life, during six days, can no more have a Sabbath of the seventh, than

a man who is intoxicated six hours, can have sweet comfort in the seventh, and the sober hour. He may have pain. He has not peace. No one can have a Sabbath who does not know how to rest in God's rest, by knowing how to share in God's work. But those who know this, render to God their whole lives. Holy service is their daily business. God's glory is in their common life. It is not worth while to ask them whether they can not spare their Maker one day in seven, for his love and service. As well ask them to pay their debts one day in seven. It is not worth while to ask God to take one day in seven. That is asking him to give up the worship of his creatures for the other six. He gives them one day for treat.

Holy Time was appointed when all beings were holy. Eden was blooming and beautiful; man was an angel. It was not hallowed therefore, to borrow the first man from folly, nor to wean him from sin. It was a day of rest in his priesthood, and of entertainment in his abundance. Even the Jewish Sabbath was given in the law which put all secular affairs into a sacred relation. And when Christian faith selected the first day of the week, every day was already dedicated to a sacred service, and hallowed by a public worship. But the period was designated for sacred luxury, beatific triumph. On that occasion, the primitive Christians changed their posture in prayer. Instead of kneeling

as usual, they stood, to symbolize the fact that Christ had risen from the dead, and that for them also there was to be a standing up—an anastasis—what we call the resurrection, the re-standing up from the dead. On that day they took up a collection, or laid it by for the poor churches. So that their Sabbath was to their week days very much what our Thanksgiving day is to our Sabbaths. The Jewish element was eliminated. The Pharisaic notion was discarded. It was not their toil, and tax, and task. It was their refreshment and their rest. It is so now. Its liberty is its law. Its law is sacred pleasure. The soul that has learned on other days how to do heavenly work on earth, may learn on such as this how to take heavenly rest. It is not all religious thought that becomes the day. It is only a jubilant train of thought. It is not inaction and inertia that will keep it holy. It is serenity and satisfaction. It is not so much praying time, as praise time. It ought not to be the only preaching day, but the day of glory preaching, the Hallelujah chorus. It is eminently fitting to dress in taste and beauty, then if ever. It would be quite seemly and sacred to make visits and to give parties, if they were heavenly visits and celestial parties. One can begin to be gay if he knows how the angels begin to be merry. No fool's mirth; but no fool's lounging either. We talk expressively about breaking Sabbath. A fracture of it breaks it all up like breaking a pane of

glass. But then it is for this world that it is designed, not for the next. What I may do on any day depends on what I can do to God—what I may enjoy on that day depends on what I can enjoy in God. Treat the outside world as if the millennium were here, and you have a foretaste of millennium.

Lying quiet in the hush of a sacred afternoon you see a ship riding gracefully in the harbor.

Can that gliding vessel sanctify the day? It can, if, in fact, it should move as to your fancy it seems to move, erranding a Gospel way, and silvering the sea with Gospel gladness. And the millennium which shall put upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord, shall turn the cities into sanctuaries and the streets into aisles, and the thronging men to worshippers.

Even now—even here—what rest, what delicious tranquillity, what celestial exhilaration can be pictured in the hours of sacred rest.

The prohibition is not an exaction. God did not demand. He blessed and hallowed. He did not take the time. He gave it. He compels worship, as a kind host says to his guests, You must eat; and presses them, as a loving father makes his children come into a pleasant parlor, when they are bashful.

Aye, man must have his recreations. But earthly recreations hover over swarming cares as, in eastern countries, little bird flocks hover over locust

swarms. They pick off some, but keep the swarm astir, and make it flutter faster to devour the herbage. Sacred pleasure, like a clearing counter wind, blows them away.

A man's recreation often is a change of work, from trudging trot to bounding gallop, as if a tired horse should see the sweltered harness give place to the saddle for parade, that he might be made to prance a little. But peace of soul is like a dewy pasture.

One who has spent such hours of communion with the fields and forests, has touched the horizon between his hope here and hereafter glory. The dumb creatures understand the pause, learning it of man, or of God directly. The rare celestial hush of soul comes suddenly. Let there be no lax preparation. The contrast is meant to be marked. The plow has dropped in the furrow. The tool lies on the bench. It is as when you have been listening sorely against your will to a clashing clangor of some factory; the resounding hammers have nearly deafened you. All at once, and for a moment, you are glad not even to hear a bird note or a human voice. It is sweet to see even the trees sleeping in the smile of God. Walking there, you walk with God. Sitting on a stone, you hear the waters in a choir syllabbling their anthem. But now begin sacred stirs. They must begin at home. Let the household learn to love that dawn. Let songs gush from the windows as bird songs from

the boughs. There are two classes of children growing up who go astray—those who have had no Sabbath at home, and those who have had an enforced one. No child ever yet went astray, or ever could fail to return, whose childhood was at once holy and glad.

Our forefathers may have erred in imposing burdens of minor observance on weak understandings, in providing prohibitions rather than refectons. But the beauty of their observance was in its crystalline completeness. The daybreak hymn, the noon prayer, the single, solid sermon, thought out and quarried from God's word by the preacher, thought over and rehearsed by hearers—the household group around the hearth—the plaintive eventide—these were forces, these were charms. After all, it matters not much where or how you spend the hours, whether they be on seventh days or on other days, if you hallow certain festivals to God, if they pass in Christian pleasure and tranquillity.

The secret is life's pause to take its look, as God Almighty paused to look back at his finished work. Even he must have his freshening pleasures.

Such sacred rest is a clear spot in the sky of his eternity, through the clouds of this mortality. Observe the clear spot of a gusty, stormy sky. First the sullen pile of cumuli break, opening crevices between their ridges. A little white streak, then a patch of sapphire. That closes up in the wheel of the rush-

ing masses, but breaks again and enlarges. Then it fringes from below. At last, look, between two banks of black and frowning vapor, spreads a crimson stripe of sunset glory. It tells two things, first, what is spreading underneath the heavy gloom, the tempest breadths; secondly, that it will break them all away, and leave the unflecked firmament and the golden stars. Men say that a little piece of pure blue, looking out, determines, after long storms, a clear day at hand.

And this little earthly pleasure of the skies is the clear spot of heaven, the glory spot that looks on Time. It tells of glory and assures us that it is to be revealed. He who has had one holy, heavenly day, has had one look of heaven. A proof that, better than theories and disquisitions.



## CHAPTER XII.

### ULTERIOR PURPOSE.

PURPOSELESS LIFE.—CHANCE LIFE.—ENERGY DEPENDS ON ITS ULTIMATE REFERENCE.—THE COMPASS.—THE SENTINEL, ETC.—WORK TOO GREAT FOR ITS AIM.—SMOKING STOVE.—STANDING ARMY.—WASTE MACHINERY.—EXCESSIVE CULTURE.—ILLUSTRATES ITS FAILURE IN PAST AGES.—MISERLY ENERGY.—SPENDTHRIFT'S ENERGY.—PLEASURE AND PLAY.—BUSINESS UNDUE.—GOD COMMERCE.—BUSY, BUNDLE, BLANK & Co.—TESTAMENTARY ZEST.—CHRISTIAN PURPOSE PARALLEL WITH CHRIST'S PURPOSE.—REALIZING SENSE NO LIMIT.—ITS PRESENT PHASES.—CHURCH HISTORY.—THE MARTYR AND THE MISSIONARY.

WE all have a horror of idleness. But there is no idleness so intense as the bustling vehemence of nothing.

On the other hand, there may be no work so profound as the deep calm of meditation. A fever is a weakness of the body. Fever force of life is a waste of the fluids. When you see one brushing into every open gate, you are quite sure that he will not go far on his road. If a man have no distinct purpose, no steadfast principle, he is like a ship scudding in the fog to meet shock and disaster. It might surprise us to discover how much of life is thus literally purposeless, a standing on the street corners, to see what will be coming round them, a promenade to meet the world, a poring over newspapers, to glean entertain-

ment. Pastime is a singular word on the lips of a mortal man, whose minutes are counted. And pastime is a favorite employment. Some have shrewdly surnamed it,—killtime. One would say that it defeated the possibility even of amusement, to set out in search of it. Yet a large proportion of social amusements are artificial and industrial efforts. Much more life is purposeless than appears at first sight to be so. Many men pursue their routine, in the shop, in the counting house, without consideration or choice. They find themselves there, and so they stay there. They have never inquired whether it were best for them to be just there, whether there they can do the most good, whether they are making the most of the time or the place. The daybreak wakes them to accustomed rounds of action. They make medley meals at certain hours, without consulting the laws of their frame. So they happen into political parties, without knowing how they get there, without asking why they remain there. Eternity is to them an odd pile of Sundays, and heaven a vague sultriness somewhere—an everlasting chapter of the Bible. They can not swim, they can not breast the tide. But if a huge roller of public sentiment sets up to the shore, they leap like shouting boys upon its white mane, and ride to the furthestmost pebble,—when it recedes, the undertow drags them with awkward scrambling over the sands. Their daily occupation, and their highest hope

is to live. In that they find their hardest work, in that their keenest satisfaction. Because they have no ultimate purpose, their purposes are petty and passing.

As in youth the aim had been, a toy and a treat, so afterwards it is a purse and a pleasure, and next a bank book and an advertisement, then a great firm, then power and office, then a notion and a crotchet, and last of all, a patient listener,—these aims chasing each other at random, and all in a file chasing the poor soul over the grave. There are bright, intelligent women, whose throbbing hearts go in vagrant fancies, and now they read, and now they stitch, and now they robe, and now they visit, and all the time accomplish nothing, and there is a constant oppression of their thought, as of breath in the dog-days, for there is no vital air of faith inbreathed; and they study the decrees of fashion as if they were on trial for their lives, and they skim the pages of maudlin romance, and they sigh and they simper, and they yawn and they mope, until the mind dies as the mind of a man will die in a prison, and they fade and pine at last, like birds shut out from God's blue sky. The glows of ingenuous ardor yellow into atrabilious envies, and the notes of enthusiasm draw into the mopings of nonsense, or shrill into the sharps of vexation and scandal. Such moral inertia steeps us in the spell of spurious education, the tutelage of

evil models. Such effeminacy oozes into the very marrow of generations.

The gospel of purpose, the Christian energy, contrasts itself with purposeless life, and no less with dissipated faculty and inadequate ends. Work and way depend not upon their present pursuits, but upon their ulterior reference. The hero is not one who is always doing wonderful things or straining up present heights. He gathers every trifle to tremendous result, and devotes the present to the future. Present endeavors may have their value only in their bearing beyond. The compass which guides the ship's course is a very slender and oscillating needle. A single sentinel pacing to and fro guards a fortress, a garrison, a town. The solitary bell ringer is pealing an alarm which is to throw back a conflagration.

A surveyor is only staking off a piece of land, but it is to determine the site of a capital. And perhaps it would be found that as the most tremendous events have had the slightest beginnings, so he effects the largest achievements who is most minute and scrupulous of detail. The best retail merchant will be the best at wholesale. The most faithful private will make the most vigilant commander. And it is on the same principle that he who is the servant of all is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the present work of a man may be too great for his ulte-

rior purpose. An energetic character is not given to parades. The activity of some men is like the draught of a smoking stove, they cast their confusions backwards again and sting your eyeballs, and stifle your lungs, with the difficulty which they should disperse in quiet, or consume in peace.

Just as a standing army assembled for the defense of the nation may become a sore tax and a sad pest; so the struggles and the achievements of much education and of much undertaking have overshot their purport and defeated their design.

The beauty of a machine is its fitness to effect a specific work; the value of it will be in exact proportion to the worth of the work. And it is the refinement, the perfection of machinery, to adjust its several parts with nice calculation to particular results. The idea is destroyed, the moment you suppose the instrument to be made for its own sake, or for an inadequate purpose. A vast steam enginery of no other purpose or use than to draw a child's sled,—a large reservoir branching its conduits to blow bubbles into the air,—the wheels and valves, and knives and hammers of a factory astir to make chips fly and play with the sawdust,—would challenge only a sneer. Given the vanity of the result, the insignificance of the aim, and in proportion to the power of the performance will be its shame.

And laud as we may the attainments of a bald civ-

ilization, and prate as we please about the culture of art, and discuss as we will the benefits of luxury in cultivating the taste of men, and furnishing employment for many hands, nevertheless one can not help recognizing somewhat of human degradation in the excessive culture, even of refinement and ornament. One can not refrain the notion, that if the primeval state of humanity be a childhood weakness, knowing no principle beyond inclination, and no purpose beyond present pleasure, the advanced state has often been a weakness of a second childhood, a luxury cherishing inordinate purposes of trifles, and taking inordinate pains in vain; that the accumulations of ancient architecture are like the accumulations of ancient feasts,—when they drew from every clime and every forest the brains of animals, or the tongues of birds, to make one costly dish; a profusion of display like the pride of Queen Cleopatra, who dissolved a pearl and swallowed it, in order to make a meal of renown;—and that the fallen towers which strew the old world, and the sunken palaces which were plunged into the dust by the hammers of time, for grave-stones as well as monuments, and the lonely pyramids which frown on the shifting sands, bare still and motionless to their fleeting volleys, and all the mournful relics of human grandeur, and all the glittering shows of human performance, stand forth as memorials, not only of human industry and of hu-

man skill, of human struggle and of human advancement, but of human waste, and human want—of the lack of a purpose worthy of man, and the baffling of an energy, everywhere beating within him, and everywhere battling around him.

It follows that the value of any purpose here depends upon its issue hereafter. The energy of a miser is as pitiful in your eyes as it is tenacious. Precious and powerful as money is on earth, for what it conveys and for what it confers; yet the love of it as an ultimate end, is a degrading madness. It throws the miser's soul into spasms, as the sight of water convulses the victim of hydrophobia. And the energy of such a madness is frightful when the dying palm clenches the gold, and the teeth gnash on coin in the last gasp, and the ghastly skeleton lies stretched on the coffered treasure. You dread this;—why? because money piling is no aim for a man—because the gold is no more his than when it lay in the spangled mine.

You furthermore despise the spendthrift's energy. No man is more busy than he. And his money does much inadvertent good—flung on the breezes, lighting by the way. But he fosters no worthy purpose, he procures no suitable return. Money can be undervalued.

There is also the enthusiasm of pleasure, at which men are apt to smile in their frowns; and there is the

ardor of sportmanship ; and there is the frenzy of play-things which have in them an absorbent quality, as it were, to take up and assimilate the souls they touch and drain their very sap into their own channels, to run elsewhere no more.

What can properly be spoken against these things is only when they usurp a control. Sweeping the tides of flowing into a current of innavigable rapids—as it were entrancing a man in their magnetic circles and unnerving him for all besides ;—condensing the essence and converging the forces of the soul upon a glow of vaporous nothing, and so parching up the juices and shriveling the frame.

But there may be just as sheer a waste of life in the heroisms of business and the chivalries of trade.

If ever there has been a famous god, to which men bowed low, on whose altar hecatombs have smoked—the clangor of whose worship has made the sky resound—it has been the deity of commerce. The strength of the race is distilled in this service. Now our question shall be, of its future import. There is the immense house of Busy, Bundle, Blank and Co., with its agents and its warerooms, and its wharves and its uncounted employees. There is a ceaseless stir. There is a steadfast order. There is unbounded credit. There is an endless enlargement of the business. It is business here and there and everywhere. And the aim is to accumulate, to invest. In that



single respect, you will confess the aim to be identical with that of the niggard. Yet there is not a miser nor a mean man in this whole establishment. From the manly boy trudging on his errands to the spectacled and grave senior partner, there is not one of them who does not aim at somewhat more, somewhat nobler. The tottering beggar will confirm the testimony of the Board of Trade.

There must be some ulterior purpose heaving every breast, and flushing every cheek. Is it mere living in this world? that is no doubtful matter. To the most that is already an investment, a security. Why should not this accumulated energy be consecrated to the scope of God's goodness? If so, if his glory be the purport, and the good of men be the aim—if that vast hall of merchandise say its daily prayer in the attitude of a human soul, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,—then it is a true temple lifting its viewless steeple in a smiling sky,—a conductor of benisons. And the beauty of holiness is as brilliant there, and the devotion is as fragrant from every soul, not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, as from any cathedral service. But if otherwise,—what is to be the result of its energy, or the value of its wear and tear?

Some men, it is true, are engrossed by the occupation of business for its own sake, and enamored with

its active charms, they never think why—they never ask of the end. The fume and the fret claim them—the toil and the trouble usurp them. The intensity of business is to them an exercise, like the exercise of a debating society, which hunts for a question, and then discusses it for the sake of discussion, careless of any opinion, like a game played without stakes. The ulterior purpose of others is testamentary. There is a mystery and glory to them in the right of making a will, the last act of poor, human will over the sod, a sort of a feint which it makes and fond fiction of being remembered, and of forecasting what shall be after it under the sun.

We cherish the word estate, which means that which is to stand, which a poor passer leaves standing behind him as the result of him, or the last of him, which he thinks will stand to remember him.

It does not stand very long for all that, for we always talk of dividing it. The heirs meet straightway to divide the estate. The principle of purpose is to be appreciated in its own essence, apart from any specific shape of its grasp, or any present object of its contract, just as you can appreciate the make of a hand which has nothing in its palm, or the muscles of a laborer as he stands at rest. The principle of evangelic purpose is the harmony into which the soul-reach brings two spheres. It is the link between here and hereafter. There results just such a relation,

just such a unity of life as is effected by a correspondence on different sides of the Atlantic.

Christian purpose is no selfseeking for eternity. The word salvation in the Bible is not a selfish word. It bespeaks not a mere escape. It is a recovery from the sin which offends God and mars his kingdom. It is a salvation of character for his sake—a salvation unto holiness. Divine holiness prompted the scheme of redemption, as much as divine pity. When the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost, he came as well for the sake of the universe as for the sake of the soul. In redeeming us from all iniquity, he purifies unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

The glory of God exults and exhibits itself in such a redemption, more than in pristine creation. Such is the purpose of Christ, and the purpose of every Christian is coincident with this. His errand moves in the plane of Christ's errand. His life, however distant and however tiny, is mathematically parallel with the life of God. And while there is brought into the fullest exercise and the finest harmony every personal motive, every individual impulse,—while fear stirs wariness, and hope kindles fervor, while the Almighty's promises are the pillar stones for the altar of his offering, and the pillow stones for his head, while he has respect to the recompense of reward, and quaffs the exhilarating tastes of present refresh-

ment, he is, nevertheless, pursuing a vaster, a nobler end, an end which fixes its center in no creature evolution, but in the axis of God's throne;—an end which sweeps in its circumference the spaces of Immensity, while he is striving to make and to be an atom of celestial purity in the sunshine of celestial joy the lustrous lavings of its Maker's smile—to sing one clear note in the melody of universal praise—to flow, a drop in the tireless cataract, a breath on the boundless air in the living hallelujah of God all in all.

And throughout a Christian course there is generated the energy of character which is brought into requisition by the scope of such a calling.

There is a frequent complaint on the part of Christians, that they have no realizing sense of everlasting things. But faith is not a realizing sense. Faith is a distinct persuasion, an abiding principle. It takes its shape in purpose. It discloses its vitality in action. There is no energy in realizing senses. They are refreshments granted, but there is no disciplinary culture by them.

Realizations are indulgences at the mercy seat and upon the mount of God. They are rare treats. They are Sabbaths of the soul. They are communion seasons of the inner life. Jacob's ladder was a realization. So was the burning bush to Moses. So was Horeb's riven rock to Israel, from whose flinty side the water gushed. So was Bethlehem's glory-lighted plain to

the shepherds. So was the transfiguration upon Tabor's brow to Peter, James and John. So was the touch of a Saviour's risen flesh to Thomas. Death will be to every ransomed soul the realization, the dawn of everlasting day, which puts these glimmering torches out. But the energy of faith grows by believing. Its eye brightens by looking. Its patience sweetens in the waiting. And the purpose which breaks from doubt and fear in the smothered cry, If I perish, I perish—grows into a higher triumph and a more enduring steadfastness, until the cry of anguish winds into a strain of security, and transcendent victory—a shout of joy, quenching with its flood every moan of doubt, and compelling the sigh of sorrow into the song of praise—Though he slay me yet will I trust in him. Pale tinting likeness of his look of triumph! Sweet, faltering echo of his dying shout, when the deep groan, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? broke into the peal of glory,—It is finished—as divers plunge beneath the darkling waves, to mount upon their crests with joy.

The Lord does not enlist his recruits for pompous parade. He drills them for battle—and the battle is unfailing victory. The ulterior aim of a Christian distinguishes him. His purpose is vested in the firmament of approaching glory. His life is hid with Christ in God. And it shall not matter how mo-

mentous, or how trivial, be the occasion before him, whether he be summoned to some petty drudgery, or to some gigantic exploit; whether there be laid upon his back some teasing infliction of shame or of sorrow which he must carry as Christ carried his cross—or whether, like that relentless cross, stern, over-mastering anguish lift him on its sharp nails, rending his temples and piercing his nerves;—it will not matter much, whether his immediate errand be to wipe the brow of the sorrowing, and fill the mouth of the hungry, or to preach the gospel to the multitude; whether he wrestle with a slippery doubt, or confront the compact scorn of men; it will not matter much whether he be toiling at the lapstone in obscurity, or picking his way amid the snares of populous, prosperous fortune; whether he falter a prayer at his cottage fireside, or burnish the platform with the gaze of thousands; whether some secret misgiving which he may not name is pricking his bosom, or he be admired for his misfortunes, and richer than all others in the sympathy which his sorrow conciliates. Every work done to the Lord; however insignificant, has its counterpart, its signification, in planetary attainment, and in celestial advantage. Every cup of cold water given on earth sparkles for him a refreshing coolness, a cordial beverage in the skies; and every shadow of trial on this sublunary ground has its flashing substance in the shadowless spheres;—and he is gaining by all that

he gives up, and he is winning in all that he loses, and he is doing all that he attempts, and he is victor over all assaults, and he is purer by every temptation, and he sings the sweeter for every sob, and he is surer for every doubt, because he works the purpose of his redeeming God in his own soul—because all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose,—because in all doings and disciplines, the energy which is demanded is at the same time developed; so that if you attempt to harm such an one, you will only help him, and if you plot to hinder him, you will only further him; and if you slander him, you will only honor him; and if you persecute him, you will only applaud him and crown him; and if you put him to death, you will only put him to life everlasting;—and thou, O! wayward world, in all thy harshness, and in all thy hatred, art but a dreary school-room, and thou, O law inflexible and cruel, art but a pedagogue to bring him the better to his Christ at last, and to his hereafter reward. Accordingly, the annals of human energy are in the keeping of the church. Sneer as men may at church history, because of the stains that blush on its pages, all true achievement, all clear renown of the past, is scrolled in its archives. Take out the church which men affect to despise, take out the old church which it is so fashionable now to shrug, and you have taken out

the pulp of human history, the juice of ancient fruitage. You have then a shriveling gourd, a refuse peel of mankind.

Did the lore of Egypt, so vaunted, ever do more than to worship the Nile, and pray to its crocodiles? What benefit accrues to mankind from the labors of Hercules? What school of philosophy has bequeathed to us truth which we could not read in the forest, or see in the sky?

The red man of the woods is as true a philosopher as the old academician.

What has been wrought by human power? What has been learned of human wisdom? If you blot out the Jewish nation, with all its exterminating wars,—what is left of purpose or of progress in the same period? If you quench the flame of the protesting Church in the middle ages, because of its gloom, and because of its sadness, what lamp burns there which could have lit the torch of civil and religious liberty?

There are two words which have blessed this poor world after all. There are two names extant, the one of which has kept the world alive, and the other of which is to freshen it to a life everlasting.

The one we call Martyr, the other we call Missionary. They were both born in the kingdom of heaven beyond. They were both baptized in the house of God. They both knelt at the cross of Christ. They both sprang from the split sides of his grave. The



one lit with his own body the gloom of the world. The other went forth to spread the seed broadcast, as the sower goes forth to sow. The one laid down his life with a sweet smile to a melody of hope. The other took his life in his hand. And it is to this martyr and missionary church that our free land owes its birth, and our sweet home owes its charms. It is to this energy, and to this faith, that our free speech and free press owe their preservation—themselves too often like vile vipers, coiling to sting the bosom that warmed them. And it is to this cross-bearing, wrong-enduring faith of the church, looking aloft, and looking afar, that our modern philosophy owes that model of earnestness, which it echoes confusedly, as the cliff echoes wildly the clear notes of the bugle. So that we may thank God this day in all attainments, and in all predictions, for the faith and patience of the saints, the energy and purpose of the church. We may still call it the pillar and ground of truth, the light of the world. And whatever be its present shortcomings, or its present declensions, it sets before us still the only pathway which advances; the only pathway which is not shut presently by an adamant wall, and precipitated into a bridgeless gulf; the only road which opens on the infinite, the only avenue which tunnels the grave, and emerges into glory, honor, immortality, eternal life.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PHILANTHROPIC RELATION.

SELF-ABSORBED LIFE.—STILL BUSY WITH OTHERS.—REFLEX SELFISHNESS.—  
SHRINKING DISCOURAGEMENT.—MODERN MISANTHROPY.—RETIRED LIFE.—  
AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?—DEFEATED PHILANTHROPY.—LONGING FOR  
RELEASE.—PLEASURE COUNTERPART.—PHILANTHROPY NOT A TRADE.—  
HEART FREEDOM IN SPIRITUAL LIFE, VS. THE TAX AND TASK OF DOING  
GOOD.—RELATED LIFE OF CHRISTIANS.—SYMPATHETIC COMMUNION.—RELA-  
TIONS TO OTHER MEN.—SHARE OF JOY AND SORROW.—CHRIST'S ERRAND.—  
OUT OF SIGHT OF THE CHURCH.—MUTUAL DEPENDENCE.—ARTISTIC POWER  
OF DOING GOOD.

IT is often difficult to tell whether men are more engaged in their own affairs, or in the affairs of their fellow-men. Sometimes we are tempted to beg the world's attention; sometimes to beg the world to mind its own business and let us alone. It is sad enough when one absorbed in himself, is at the same time engrossed with his fellows. For in that case he passes among them, a heartless body, with cold, staring eyes, and wagging tongue, a dead and deadening humanity. The heart heat is so condensed on itself, that the touches of life are blue with the cold. Society has a raw feel and a cadaverous look. There is much regard to others which is only a reflex self-seeking.

The hero worship so much vaunted, admits as much

formality and hypocrisy as the most abstract worship of God. The household gods which men adore are household servants. The favorite preacher, the favorite author are precious to man, so far as they serve him. Minds have their Shakespeare or their Milton, their hero of history, or their hero of the times; just as a master prides himself on his pet servants, or as a languishing lady has her lap-dog and her canary. It is self still, thus diversified and thus reduplicated, on which the attention is often riveted, when it seems to be most dispersed. It is self still, as when in curious looking-glasses lenses are combined to show you your own face over again in fifty little images. To many souls, religion is only such a looking-glass, highly polished and intensely magnifying. It is very difficult to have much of another's soul in the way of affection, or even of attention. The only way in which you can get love in this world, is by paying an equivalent, and then you must take care that you be not over-reached. The poet says, That love, and love only, is the loan for love, as if it were the bravest thing that could be said. To love one much, who loved you less, was reckoned magnanimity. But to love them that hate you is Christianity.

Sometimes the soul fences and enriches itself like a flower plot, like a garden, until the world seems like a fenceless common outside. And you see this leisurely, delicate life, morning by morning rapt in its

own devotions, weeding its own little bed, choice of its large carnations, and chary of its variegated tulips; and bending over its rose buds, caring little that the solitary place be glad, or the wilderness bud and blossom as the rose.

A true religion will diffuse itself as a pure philanthropy, just as the air of heaven expands into a vacuum on earth, as the shower of the skies thrills into marrow of the soil.

There is more than one guise of misanthropy.

There is no seeming of our nature which furnishes such a curious study, or demands such a scrutiny, as the theory of benevolence to man.

When one has found out how much usefulness after all is useless, and how much work is waste; when he has discerned that into whatever shapes and patterns human nature may be cut, it is the same stuff still; that if you drill men in battalions, and parade them in uniforms, they will get just as weary and hungry, and grow sick and die; when, as he is looking into the still lake of fancy upon a visionary world which springs to his gaze—he sees just the inversion of the landscape around him of which, in its positive and solid substance, his eyesight palled, a reaction ensues and the furthest reach of wisdom seems to be that which flees away the furthest from the sight of men. And so it sometimes happens that an enthusiast becomes a hermit. It was so in ancient benevolence.

A recluse, ascetic life, seemed to many the height of moral attainment; a hermitage, or a grove, was esteemed the home of philosophy. The Cynic could do nothing for mankind but sneer at their faults. The Stoic could only hold his peace. The Epicurean could laugh. The wise man was one who went apart from all others and practiced reserves.

Ecclesiastical monkery took its rise in the same way. It seemed as if no good could be done in the world. It were better to retire from it. But, for the most part, modern misanthropes do not dwell in caves or crags. They are more apt to be found in elegant parlors, or in cozy studios. Their phrase also is polite. They do not growl to you to get out of their sunshine. They never suffer you to get within it. They chill you with a cheerless, vapid smile. They paralyze you with a raw, blank stare. They belabor you with many pointless words; but they are misanthropes still. They have no courage and no care for any bettering process. They shrug the hazards and the hardships of good causes. They look jaded and haggard upon any fervors.

New enterprises are very dreary to them. The management of them is always full of faults. Every advocate of a good cause is either a hypocrite or a fanatic. He either goes too far, or he does not go far enough. It has some how devolved upon them to be censors and critics. They will give, it is true,

now and then, if you will only cease to annoy them. But it is with an excruciating air of severity, as if they were inflicting a rebuke to some pertinacious beggar.

Misanthropy is sometimes biting in its bitterness, and shrill in its scream even now. Many a newspaper is black and green with it, as if it had been steeped in gall. Many a sermon, many a speech, many a rebuke of evil, many a zeal for right and truth thinks itself fearless, when it is only reckless and desperate. Many a zealot fumes at iniquity, when he is only passionate in his own name.

Much seems to be virtuous lamentation, which is only interior melancholy foaming at the mouth. A mad dog will bite whatever comes in his way, although his head hang down,—so too will many a mournful man, lank and lackadaisical as he is.

But for the most part the modern misanthrope practices the charity of indifference. He is good-natured enough. He smiles carelessly on all. Splendid mansions draw their massy window curtains. Neat villas lock their wicket gates to fatten a misanthropic luxury. The lights that dance and flicker there, twinkle no welcome on the wanderer, no blessing on the world. Existence laps itself in downy do-nothing, and festoons itself in innocent recreations, and exhausts itself in sighs, and wears itself out in struggles for amusement, and stultifies itself to a monotony in search of something new—until that domed

and frescoed dwelling becomes an anchoritic cell, a hermit's cave in all but the meditative wisdom and the pondered problems. Rich men are retiring from the world, and bolting and chaining the doors after them, not sacredly like the olden fathers to study for it; not even gracefully, like nuns, to pray for it, and chant their vesper hymns, but as the fox retires to covert to devour his meal, or as the night bird dozes on his perch by day.

There is enough in the bank, and there is enough in the larder. There is no further end of life, but to pull down the barns and build greater.

And the life wilts and incrusts, and the thoughts grow obese and effete, and the soul faints in its own phlegm, and suppurates to watery humor, and the heart, like Nabal's, is as dead as a stone. So have you seen a tinted flower fade in the close chamber, which would have bloomed in the breeze. So have you noticed in the spring time, that sluggish ponds inclosed in the woods were ice-locked still, when running streams were already sparkling and free. Many a young man considers himself a hero in disguise from others, when his heart frets against the fences of life, as a colt champs the picket, stamping the pasture. At the same time he excuses himself from any active service of benevolence because he is not settled in life, as he will by and by excuse himself because he is too profoundly settled;—now be-

cause he assumes no responsibility, his life being not yet adjusted,—next, because he has his own responsibilities, and a life already preoccupied;—now, because he has seen so little of the world, and then because he sees so much of it.

Let us be sure of this thing,—that any one, however flippant, or however scornful, who asks, like Cain, Am I my brother's keeper? like Cain has sometime lost his brother, like Cain has somehow slain him. Sometimes, indeed, it seems in vain to deal with men. To instruct them is to write noble thoughts upon the beach and watch the waves play fancifully upon them. To admonish them is to shout in the winds, which lull their breath as if to hear you, then wheel away in wilder mockery. To do them favors often seems like flagging your sidewalk with your jewels, that heedless feet may shuffle over it.

To be a benefactor is to make yourself a mountebank for their amusement, as one lets children strike him in their play. And then your mouth waters for a cabin in the woodlands, for a cot in the valley where the rivulet purls in freshening peace, for a stand on the mountain's brow, bare-headed in the breeze, for a lounge upon the grass, for a stroll of silence and a joyous sauntering afar. And you fling aside the harness of professional career, losing life from toilsome relations to mankind, and ask



yourself in petulance and pain, What are these to me? What am I to them? What shall we have to do with one another in the dust? Let me, too, draw the breath of life, while I profess to live. Yet none draw such delicious breath as they whose toil is hard. The laborer's sweat is sweet. It is waste work alone that wears the soul.

Philanthropy is a vital character, philanthropy is not a trade. One who is by profession a philanthropist is for the most part an egotist. He is also a man of one idea, as you often say. It is by no means fair to say this of one whose heart is all aglow with some good cause; whose life rays of ardor all converge to one focus of endeavor. He, the toiler and the watcher, has many ideas, more than most men. But they are rays in a pencil of beneficence. They are chords in a melody of purpose. It would be more fitting to say of him, He does one thing at one time.

Whatever be its mode of manifestation or of access, a real faith in the God-man is a real and a confident sympathy with all manhood. The power of eternal life effects this influence by setting the heart at liberty. One bound in chains would be a sorry comforter at the bedside of the sick. A single cheery face is better help in the hour of misgiving than much wealth. A stout heart is better company in peril than a stack of arms, or a hireling guard. Now there is in all doubt a languor and distrust

of life which saps the sympathies. In all skepticism there is a cowardice which is infectious. No man is half a man whose sins are unforgiven. A mind in suspense, a heart ill at ease, can not afford much solace to another. You would scarcely choose one oppressed with debt for the counselor of your embarrassments, nor one languid in disease for your nurse. And there is something about the most of us which constricts us in a self-attention, as a humor in the blood, or an eruption of the skin. Selfishness is not so much the willfulness of our dispositions as it is the misfortune of our lives; at least that style of selfishness which men detect and every man deploras in other men. There is a doubt of ourselves, an unsettled attitude, an anxiety of to-day, a fear of to-morrow. If the outward world be shut out and lofty visions seize us, we become straightway timid. If we find naught to trouble us, we are troubled like the disciples of old, because thoughts arise in our hearts. So that the larger amount of good giving and good doing on this earth is an impost laid, a tribute paid, a tax assessed upon weary, heavy-laden spirits, who have little heart to refuse and less to give, and little time to inquire and less disposition. They appease conscience by obeying the mandates of societies and agents. They hide ignorance by abusing agents and smiling incredulously on societies. They stimulate generosity by verbose voluble circulars, and eloquent

harangues,—each enterprise in its hey-day, each cause on its anniversary. They practice economy by giving trifles or by making excuses. They have neither time, nor taste, nor hope enough to investigate facts, nor patience to await results. And all this springs from no lack of kindliness, if that is what you mean by selfishness, but from that self-occupation, that vexed and tried plight of the heart, that enslavement of the being which limps to and fro, staring with wan eyes, and plaining with chattering teeth, Who will show us any good? But let a broad Christianity invest the soul—let the scope of this redemption scheme encompass it—let a man receive into his being, and assimilate unto his life the substance of vital truths, and the soul is safe, the heart is at rest.

Of all the wrongs which the slave has suffered, of all the losses he has met, none is so foul, none so terrible as his loss of voluntary usefulness. He may be used, he may be turned to abundant uses. But a slave who has no legal rights, has no right to do good. He has no time, no money, no labor, no muscle, no nerve, no mind, no will, which he can call his own. He has nothing which he can give. And the soul in bondage slaves it at the best. But the enfranchised soul has a mission, an office akin to that of angels, an angelhood of terrestrial service. God does not demand this or that. There are no tasks, that there may be high heroism. There are no exactions, that

there may be spontaneous gifts. There is no overseer, upon the sacred premises, that the people may have a mind to work. There is no tale of bricks extorted, that the temple may be built of glowing hearts. The emancipated heart, in the flush and fervor of its happiness, is for the first time competent to make others happy, and for the first time thoroughly aroused to such a conception.

The right apprehension of the world beyond establishes the real communion of this world. Eternal life is a thing complete. It incloses in its embrace every interest, every tie of human existence. When we arrange men under two ranks, the Christians and the Christless, they are not just the spiritual relations which are thus classified. Every natural affection, every local relation which is interlaced with the life of the soul, is thereby enveloped either in its prospect of glory, or its state of darkness and doubt. On the one hand, Christians stand related to each other, as children of the same father, pilgrims on the same road, and heirs of the same home. The Son of man, with his infinite knowledge, can touch each separated heart with the glow of his love, the smile of his face, blending them all in one, as the sun can spangle a myriad gems, and glitter in the countless orbs of dew, making one lustrous sunshine of all. Nor shall such a fellowship restrict itself to a common-place formalism, or a hasty indulgence of abstract emotions.

There will be within it all that interest of life which is encircled by the same restorative force and charm. There will be no kind meetings at communion tables, that are stiff hauteurs in the streets. There will be no bland greetings at church doors, that are gossiping scandals by the way. There will be no simultaneity of worship, which shall be variance in society, a bickering in other life. There will be no love in prayer which, like a magician's trick, becomes malice in politics. There will be no smile at meeting which curls at passing into a sneer. There will be no church courtesy in the aisle, which is sharp rivalry in the market house. There will not even be the barriers of world fashions, the uncongenialities of world taste. There will, it is true, be no ideal or romantic incoherence. There will be cherished no impracticable companionship. But we must come at last to this conclusion, that all distinctions within the Christian church which are based upon lack of congenialities, vanish as the life of hereafter becomes articulate here. A congenial prospect, a congenial glory, will congenialize its subjects. And while it may be a fact that many spiritual lives are unfitted for each other's company in that large aspect of their separate shapings which they have left outside the reach of their life to come, and that element of pleasure or of hope which they have need of besides the birthright of eternity, it is no less true, that in the

proportion in which they renounce the pride of life, which is the vanity of dust, they become assimilated to each other; and that when soul reach takes the complexion of glory, there will be no disciples of Christ too rich or too genteel, too intellectual or too refined, to company with other disciples in the sight of men.

But God's children stand in an express relation to others of their fellow-men. A Christian is a minister of Christ to man. A saved man represents his Saviour to every man unsaved. God has not set the judgment throne. We need not pace like sentinels before it. Christ gives a gospel. We must announce it. Heaven's care for men is a perfectly natural and human care—a care for pained and withered members—a care for blind eyes and palsied frames—a care for maniac minds—a care for hungry mouths and frightened nerves.

The divine sympathy is a sharing sympathy—a sympathy with mourners and with watchers—a sympathy with distressed fathers and heart-broken mothers and weeping sisters.

And the true grasp of life to come neither degrades the gospel, by making it no worse than earthly moralism and temporal philanthropy, nor defrauds the gospel by shading away from earthly hands and temporal affairs the reflection of the life and immortality which that gospel brings to light.

He who has felt the play of Christian joy in his breast,—he who has seen Christ's tears flow, will be ready to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. He who stood gazing at Jerusalem's ill fate, with eyes suffused, has left such lessons for his church to learn. He has always such cities, such vistas on this globe, and bids his church look on them with brimming eyes and outstretched hands. This world stands in its very beauty and culture of shrubbery and floral sweetness, an inclosed and decorated cemetery. The church of Hereafter lifts its tower in a very church-yard of all that is Here. One of his errands to this earth was to heal its sorrow. In our zeal to show that he had a deeper purpose, we may forget this fact. The church forgets it often, losing sight of his gentle form in the cloud of her dogmatics, losing the sound of his naked, languid, blistering feet, in her courtly palaces, silk-cushioned, golden-fringed. Cathedral light that glints and mellows through stained glass, effeminates the sight. A minstrel lullaby charms the house of God into an odd, slumbrous holiness.

Christ has passed on. He is out of sight. He has left the pulpit on the mountain. A blind beggar holds him by the wayside. He is stroking household tears away. A famished crowd are seated round him on the grassy knoll. The poor have the gospel preached unto them. The Master's skill is for human bodies

as well as human souls. You may not do good in his name, unless, like him, you have a tender heart. It were idle to preach to the wretched with full-worded tongue, if you stretch out an empty hand. The most eloquent gospel gesture with which you can enforce the truth, is a generous, loaded arm. A theological starch church that has no bowels is a church of infidels. If it have no charity it has no faith. When we see a cold, cadaverous, moral lecturer, a bitter, censorious, lynx-eyed teacher, we despair of him. He shall do no good. Let him taste the gospel first. It will purge his humors, it will stir his blood. If he cross the threshold of the poor, he will cast a long shadow, the air will grow damp and thick upon the sufferer's brow. If a prim, chill-handed female gossip undertake to scold and tutor some forlorn and feeble household into reformation, the kindness shall be like ointment from which the fragrant scent has long exuded, like a stubble field in which there is no grazing. She shall come upon them in all her rustling silk and flapping lace and stately courtesy and kidded fingers, and long-drawn circumlocutory sentences, and expressionless, vapid stare, or sweeping, flouncing glances, an intolerable pest, binding heavy burdens upon other shoulders, which she does not touch with one of her dainty fingers.

We live in a world of wants and sorrows. Let us not goad them into infidelities, or drive them forth



into outlawries and profanities, as domestic animals are teased and maddened by a wanton sport into wild, ferocious monsters. Possession beyond inspires benevolence here. He gains, he gets, who diminishes the pains of life in any human being. He produces, he creates, who starts a tear of gratitude on the dry eyeballs of agony, and plants a smile upon the lean, rigid cheek of want. He is a painter, he an artist, who can tinge the pale, parched lips of penury with a ruby red, and he a sculptor, who can round the shrunken, haggard figure into robust and comely plumpness.

God is a reservoir, an exhaustless fountain of goodness, but we are pipes and conduits. If we are choked with slimy selfishness, or split and flawed in lack of human sympathy, we are not fit vessels to distribute, and must be replaced. The vast fullness that flows from the world beyond, the overflow of Eternity on temporal lives, is to be conveyed by us, without obstruction, without stint. It is for this very end that this world has been electrified by the touches of the world beyond. Faith renders little time lives the magnetic needles of eternity.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONTRACTION AND EXPANSION.

CONTRACTION NOT CIRCUMSTANTIAL.—CURRENT NOTIONS CONTRADICTED.—THRIVING BY DISADVANTAGE.—COUNTER FORCES.—RUSTIC TOIL—MERCANTILE CONFINEMENT.—CITY LIFE.—RURAL FREEDOM AND RURAL RESTRAINT.—SCHOLARSHIP.—LUXURY.—MODE SECONDARY.—TWO LIVES OF THE SAME THOUGHT.—SECTARIANISM NOT OF RELIGIOUS ORIGIN.—ART.—SCIENCE.—LARGER SPHERES.—MORAL BIGOTRY NOT CONVICTION.—EXCLUDES THOROUGH CONVICTION.—SOUL HEALTH PRECLUDES BIGOTRY.—THE SECTARIST AND DEMAGOGUE.—SAUL OF TARSUS.—PERSECUTION THE INFLUENCE OF THE STATE IN THE CHURCH.—ROMAN EMPERORS.—NEERO.—JESUITS.—MOHAMMED.—PRESENT SECTS FOLLOW SAME LAW.—THE CHURCH ITSELF INTEGRANT.—CHREIST'S VESTURE.—ICE CAKES IN RIVER FLOW SOLUBLE.—RIGHT VIEWS OF HEREAFTER PRECLUDE LATITUDINARIANISM.—INDIFFERENTISM A CONTRACTION.—AFTER-DINNER GAZE AT TRAMPERS.—FAR THOUGHT MAKES LIBER-ALITY.—LOWLINESS AND LOFTINESS.—LARGENESS ADMITTING CONTRASTS.—CLUSTERING STARS.

THE soul of man is elastic—it can expand, it can contract. Either susceptibility is as exquisite and subtle as it is unlimited. This tendency is not so dependent on circumstances as we are apt to imagine. There is scarcely a pursuit which may not dilate the character; there is rarely one which can not cramp it. There is no little circumstance impinging the life which does not leave its imprint—like the touch of a finger on your arm. There is no such paleness of pressure, into which the retreating blood does not bound again with more vehemence. And

it sometimes seems as if there were only a tidal life in human character, an ebb and flood flow of thought, as regular in its returns as it is mysterious in its origin, so that you can tell when certain powers will be in full play, and when certain passions will subside; when certain dispositions will show themselves, and where certain traits will trace their lines, just as you tell on the beach at what hour the high-water-mark will be touched, at what point the shells and the sea weeds will be stranded; when to lay your nets, and when to lift them.

The spirits of men are heaving in their bosoms, like their lungs. The lungs ply in sleeping and in waking life, and the world is full of spiritual undulations, that sink and swell not only in the struggles of consciousness and the excitements of endeavor, but in the calm of repose and the slumbrous dreamings of forgetfulness; not only in brief aspects of present condition, but in shapings for a changeless condition—a last shape to which each soul shall substantiate itself and stand solid and stiff.

For ages the mountains and the valleys of this earth have stood—the cavernous ravine and the spreading table land. Once they were only bubbles,—waves and ripples of the liquid earth, the boiling granite,—or floating, fluttering fringes in chaotic gloom. So is soul life liquid now, and fluent, only that it may assume its final shape.

The laws of expansion are laws of vital consequence.

A true liberty of soul is an uncommon attainment. Only a soul at liberty can be a liberal soul. That is not a genuine enlargement which is developed on one side. That is more properly a bulging and misshapen condition. You would not pronounce that the growth of a man which should dislocate his joints; nor that the growth of a tree which should lift its roots out of the ground. Now it is the disproportion between the human spirit, and its limited sphere of mortal existence, which restrains and so distorts its powers; the struggle of the finite after the infinite in the midst of the finite. The attempt of every mind to substantiate infinity to itself, and realize its ideal in some present comprehension, issues in the contraction of the very being.

Such a contraction must induce deformity, because the being was made to be a conductor of infinity, to dwell at large in the immensity of God. The soul is flattened or sharpened, or somehow twisted out of its original pattern. And this is not a matter of circumstance. We are apt to concede that some employments benumb the mind, and that some positions dwarf it. On the other hand we claim circumstantial advantages, as of education, society or pursuit,—as if there were better facilities in these for development. The polished citizen takes it for granted that the mind

of the untutored clown is narrower than his own. The man of large commercial dealings or political affairs would spurn the close sphere of a mechanic. A delicate and dainty damsel, bedecked and bepraised in a bright parlor, may stare compassionately on the plying housewife or the busy dairy-maid. Again, however, we are startled by the discovery of characters that thrive under disadvantages, as the grass grows under the tread. We see strength and beauty springing in the wilds of life, as one finds choicest flowers in the woods. We set these down as exceptions, puzzling ourselves to find their secrets and their specialities. But the matter becomes more profound when we recognize the historic fact which shapes itself into a law, that almost all greatness rises from obscurity, like the moon from the shadows of the evening; that almost all success grows out of disadvantage, as trees yield the richest fruitage around whose roots the rankest decay has spread. A close look establishes the fact that while an external condition warps the being on one side, it can enlarge it on the other.

While the mind of the rustic is wrinkled in some aspects by his rough life, as his hands grow hard with toil,—in others it is pulpy and blooming, like his cheek, beyond that of the student, clearer than that of the author, and as sensitive as that of the poet.

There is a wilted plight of thought in the dry at-

mosphere of mercantile confinement, felt nowhere else. Yet there is cultured there, a marked alertness, a peculiar comprehensiveness.

There is an expansiveness of citizen life in the city, among pattering throngs, towering edifices, and prompt haste; there is no less a shrunken absorption there, in the exclusion of sky and the monotonous murmur,—a sense of sinking individualism in the mass, life.

We all know rural freedom in its hush, as if it had just grown still, its freshness as if dressed to meet us, its yarded segment of landscape and sky, as if horizoned exactly to the content of our approaching thoughts, and only throwing wide its folding doors at our step onward. We have all felt again the rural restraint, the rural oppressiveness, when the landscape stood vacant in its tameness, like bare walls of a bleak church, after the minister has left the pulpit, and the crowd have left the pews.

Scholarship has its largeness and wide ranges like the early mammoth. But scholarship is found at last embedded in its marl or fossilized in its rock prisons. Luxury diversifies the thought in endless evolutions of refinement—wreathing it with beautiful shapes. Luxury clouds the thought with ennui, as with the smoke of its own aromatic viands and narcotic whiffs.

In any case, if the faculties be once compelled to turn back upon themselves, and shrink within self-

dom, it is of no more moment what the form of contraction may be, than what direction the spinal curvature shall take, when the spinal marrow is impaired and the vertebræ are rendered carious.

The secret of disproportion is in the loss of harmony between the lives of the same thought—the spheres of its range. For, there are to every thought two lives, two spheres, alike real and essential; its access to the Infinite, which we call imagination, and its contact with the Finite, which we call actuality; just as one whose feet cling to earth, breathes in the atmosphere that circulates through the empyrean.

Any discord between its Infinite and its Finite ends in such deformity.

Sectarianism is the aggressive attitude of mutual distortion. But sects are no more nascent in the religious history of the human mind, properly so called, than in every phase of it when its two spheres stand related.

Bigotry may be more palpable in the church, in its flat contradiction of the love of God. But you only track it there, as you see a serpent creeping from his hole under the garden hedge, because he loves to wriggle through the grassplot and the garden beds.

Art has its schools exclusive, and its critics hostile to each other, because Taste touches Truth, and Beauty reaches after Divinity.

Science has made its marches over battle fields of

theory, scaling cliffs and storming castles of gigantic, granite-rooted prejudice.

Philosophy is a debating club at last.

It is in the largest spheres and the noblest purposes, that the soul sooner droops and collapses into some misshapen narrowness. Man always shows his limits most, in the spectacles of his greatest reaches; and the weak points of great men, the deficiencies of efficient enterprises, and the blemishes of lustrous shows are most conspicuous, as noontide lengthens shadows on the ground, as tempests roughen most the broadest waters.

It is for this reason that moral bigotry is so much fiercer than artistic exclusiveness or political partisanship. It is perfectly compatible with fickleness and ignorance, a weakness of grasp, a hovering between spheres. It is utterly incompatible with any harmonious range of both spheres. So far from identifying itself with the steadfastness of principle, the permanence of intelligent conviction, it invariably renders those the stiffest zealots for their notions, whose notions are the most confused; those the most relentless in their dogmatic doggedness, who are the shallowest in their convictions. They are the cruel haters of a truth, who once paid fulsome court to it and could not win it, as foppish love rejected by a noble heart, turns itself to prankish malice and mean revenges. Bigotry having never seen the infinite good, accredits



only its pet forms of good. What other good it sees, it disdains. It pardons evil in its favorites, sooner than truth in its opponents. Limiting its theory of all things, it will force all things to its theory. What links of adamant, and what golden rivets may be lacking, it supplies by sedgy ropes and rusty pins. If its material of truth be spent, it will sooner make a material of nothing than borrow a material abroad. If its tools fail, it will sooner stop work than use other tools. If a strange physician of new name prescribe a potion for it, it will sooner swallow a poison. If it may not visit Heaven in the amblings and the prancings of its own conceit, it will lie weather-bound at Hell. And yet its only quarrel seems to be, with the ignorance and illiberality of other thought, as one who staggers in intoxication, thinks that the streets are reeling round him and the lamp posts flying in his face. But he who boasts his lack of confidence in other minds, is called to mourn the loss of candor in his own. To reckon every other man a rogue, is a speedy way to become one yourself, unless it prove that you became one long ago. At the precise point where spiritual health is hearty, bigotry is canceled, as cramp leaves the limbs when the blood tingles in their veins.

The very same temper which renders a man an iron-handed sectarist, would render him a virulent and unscrupulous demagogue. Saul of Tarsus was

at one time a pattern of a persecutor. But Saul of Tarsus was at that time as much a politician as a theologian. His passion concentrated in that compound. The Scribes and Pharisees were crafty worldlings, as well as hide-bound votaries of superstition.

Historically, the power of persecution has not been the influence of the church upon the world, but the restriction of the state upon the church. It was in the jealous hour of Rome's political decline, in the plots and counter-plots of emperors, whose purple was alike treacherous and betrayed, that the most sanguinary edicts mowed the Christian ranks. Nero was no more a votary of Jupiter than a worshiper of Christ, but a sinister and cowering foe of God and man. More rational and even-handed persecutors were plied by deep state reasons and the necessities of their ambition. Persecution in the name of Christ raged most when the Jesuits, no longer studious monks, became cabinet courtiers and crafty statesmen. It was Mohammed's dynasty, rather than Mohammed's sacred fervor, that flashed in the brandishing of Mohammed's sword. And it would not be at all difficult to show, in ransacking the pages of history, that the persecuting mania which has raved in the frenzy of contracted thought, has been a struggle to suppress high thoughts of the ultimate within the tyrannous control of a self-willed contraction.

And if at the present day a pert and captious scepticism shall essay to taunt the church of life with its dissensions and divisions, the demurrer can be well put in, that sects are not maintained by truth searches, but by truth snatchings. The sects in any given town, to-day, are its wordy, worldly barriers, put up by its worldliness, in its sanctuary. They are its fashions and its tastes, rather than its researches and convictions. Often they are its mercenary rivalries, where local churches crowd to competitions contact, and where ecclesiastical organisms are only corporations,—where ministers are employees, preachers are agents, and as such must be faithful, even loyal.

After all, it is not the church distracted which keeps the world from God, but the godless and self-worshipping world which keeps the church distracted. If the hearts of churches could be laid together, they would be heard to tick as simultaneously in prayer as the truest watches brought together in one room. If the church of faith could be sifted from secular audiences that overcrowd it, and secular tones that stultify it, it might still appear carved with diversities, but it would no longer appear split and splintered with divisions. There would be folds and rustlings of its robe, but there would be no tatters and unsightly rents. There might be variegated colors on the pattern ground,—but there should be no sutures and no seams. It would be like Christ's own vesture, which they must

needs strip from his sacred back before they could crucify him, without seam,—woven from the top throughout.

All genuine Christian sects are time formations, soluble in their common flow of eternal fact, as grating ice cakes are but water crystals, soluble in their common river flow when the sun rays reach them.

They would disappear in that elemental faith which should still engross their particles, and preserve their truth, resolving only their immobile hardness, and their wayward shapes, and swelling their reality into a fluent tide, a mingled might, rolling in a single and a steady anthem. But in such a liquefaction there would drop out from these Christian sects many a boulder, many a pebbly conglomerate, many a mass of sand most glutinous, and mud most gelatinous, which had shaped itself to a Christian sect, in a rigid iciness, and ground and crushed in the crushing and the grinding, but which was rock and mire after all, that could neither float nor flow, but must sink for ever to the bottom bed of all untruthfulness. In that case, while the differences between all real Christianities would dwindle, the difference between the church and all debating clubs, all art unions that call themselves churches, would stand exhibited, and because Christianity would desist from chattering and clamoring in the name of Jesus Christ, mankind would desist from the delusion that to clamor and

to chatter in the name of Jesus Christ, is Christianity.

A right reference to hereafter, will educate life here to liberality, but not to latitudinarian listlessness. Faith expands the heart. It does not tear to shreds the cuticles. It does not so applaud the voice of God as to confound his speech. It does not so rejoice in gospel, as to interpret that there was no need of gospel, as to believe that every thing is gospel. It does not hold, that Christ has died to prove that there was no need that Christ should die. Indifferentism is as much a warping of soul as sectarianism.

To stand upon the threshold of your own belief, at ease and lounging, while lost men pick their way before your eyes, congratulating them that they are sincere—to smile on poor starving spirits from the window of your hope, as rich men, sleek and satiate, stand at the windows, from their household dinners and their ruddy ember glows, and smile upon the beggars tramping through the rain, their vest-strings straining with their gross content—this is no expansion—this is no liberal and charitable big heart; this is a base contraction, a corpulent and distempered engorgement, which destroys the heart. If our faith have no concern for fellow souls, it is a faith that will not fetch a Saviour's sympathy, nor telescope a Saviour's smile. But the same far thought which makes the spirit passionate for essential truth, will make it

lavish, facile, patient, in respect to all besides. It will bid wanderers come within doors from the pitiless tempest, and parley afterwards, if they must. It will entertain strangers in thought, and foreigners in idiom, as best it can, without discourteous disputes.

The littleness of all that is, is absorbed in the largeness, the loftiness, the assurance of that which is to come. Faith's intuition is distinct. Its principles are radiances. And the whole nature expands in the prospect of its exaltation. Questions are only premature inquiries about the home which it is on the way to see. Any one is fitting company who is to be companion of the angels. Any one is noble, who is loyal to his God.

Simplicity becomes majesty. Christ's human love is so lifted in Christ's divine claim, that the least of stature and the lowliest of state can see it plainly. Eternal life rises so, and so transcends the turrets of pride, the peaks of ambition, that the lowliest can see it nearest, as lying prone upon the ground, you better penetrate the zenith cope and tell the flushings of the firmament, than he who gazes from a palace window. There is no capacity of the being which does not fill itself at this reservoir, and so expand, as the same air swells the bird's trilling throat and plies the sea's thundrous rhapsody. The same endless life opens before the untutored convert, the regenerate savage,

that could only lisp the name of Jesus, caught upon the wind,—and the man of God, who ponders the unfinished problems of the spaces.

The same holiness has germed in the patient breast of the bedridden saint and the rugged heart of the veteran preacher. There is the same safety for the harassed doubter, tossed like a sea-farer, and for the calm equable reasoner, living always at home.

The baby that slept in Christ's arms, knowing naught of his doctrinal features, now wakes in his glory and walks in his fullness; the thief from the cross has gone where Moses is, whose face shone upon Sinai;—the Lazarus outcast is in the bosom of the father of the faithful.

And as stars afar from this earth seem to cluster nebulously together, because they are all in heaven, so in the common glory of that all-containing home, the measureless expanse of life to come, the soul can secure its own elasticity of expansion, and its own domesticity of repose.

## CHAPTER XV.

### INTELLECTUAL HARMONY.

RELATIONS OF MIND AND HEART.—MATTER IS MOTION—OBEDIENCE.—THOUGHT IS MIND—MOTION.—TWO CONDITIONS OF HARMONY.—KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE AND KNOWLEDGE OF PLACE.—SELF-KNOWLEDGE OF RACE CULMINATING.—SELF-DISGUISE.—STILTS.—NATIONAL SELF-IGNORANCE.—TRAVELING AND WANDERING.—MIND CONVULSION.—THE REVELATION OF MAN IN HISTORY.—THE FAMILY BIBLE OF THE RACE.—DIVINE VALUATION OF MAN THE ONLY CLUE TO SELF-KNOWLEDGE.—LOSS OF THAT SECRET.—ITS RECOVERY.—INARTICULATE POETS.—PRESENT POSTURE OF HUMANITY.—FUTURE CONDITION OF HARMONY IN TRUE MATERIALISM.

THE relations of man's mind to his heart are subtle and inexplicable. But they are so vital that no treatise of the one can leave the other untouched. Every religion is in some sort an education. Every education is at least so far a religion as to determine the thought-moulds, the mind-shapes into which, and through which, spiritual forces shall make their way. The proper balance has not been often sought, has not yet been settled. There are men whose religious life has too little of a studious and comprehensive theology. There are men whose religious life has too much. But we approach a period when the moral character of intellections, and the intellectual character of spiritual exercises, must be harmonized. The mass of men read more and reason more. Their char-



acter is involved in their education. To the development of emotional character, there will be requisite the order and the culture of a sound intelligence. It will therefore be no digression to look into the prospects and the place of this intelligence. Philosophies of Religion multiply and fail. But there is a Religion of Philosophy which will live and reign.

There are certain conditions under which the mind of man can work to advantage. As these conditions fit our nature, and blend with one another, they establish a true harmony of life. As they fit the race to fill its sphere, they constitute the vantage ground of thought. Thought is mind-motion—to us, then, in the strictest sense, it is mind-being. We can tell a mind in motion, but we can not tell a mind in essence. In physics, the latest and most occult conclusion is, that motion is the ultimate of matter; that is to say, when you have analyzed all ponderable substances to their imponderables,—you find that the secret forces which underlie and rule all organisms, the heat and light, the magnetism and the electricity, which we sometimes call laws, and sometimes substances,—disclose themselves to be motions, and disclose nothing further of themselves. And such an ultimate of natural law is an ultimate theology. For nature thus defines itself to be an obedience to God, and nothing else. Nature is only action,—action that makes something out of nothing. Inquisitive science said,

—*ex nihilo nihil fit*,—you can not make any thing out of nothing. Maturer, more transcendent science exclaimed, The universe is only the visible garment which God invisible, is ever weaving for himself. Riper science next proceeded to say,—nothing is as in itself, but everywhere something is becoming. And diplomad, graduate, at length, science shall meekly say, All things are only in the making,—*nihil fit sed ex nihilo*,—nothing is made but from nothing. We inquire, for example, what light is, and far upon the highest pinnacle of perception the astronomer lifts his dim glass to the sun to-day, and peers into the spheres, sending us this reply;—Light is only coming always, only floating and waving; it is not a substance, but it is a shining; it is not a separate creation, it is an obeying impulse somewhere in creation; it is not a form, it is the gesture of some form invisible, the motion of some substance. It exists, as wind exists, as sound exists. Even now God is always saying,—Let there be light,—and light is always being.

To-day, says science, coming down from its observatory,—to-day, as ever, there is no natural body visible, but everywhere there is obedience to God.

Now, in the same way that matter reveals itself to be motion physical, mind is disclosed as motion metaphysical. And in order to the full advantage of mind-motion, the perfection of mind-life, there must be in-

duced its harmony with all existence, and its recognition of all law. It must be simple obedience—an obedience of the finite to the infinite, of the contingent to the absolute, of the individual to the universal. There are obvious conditions of all mind work essential to its harmony. The ages bring them into view and within reach, as they make the coming age a vantage ground of mind. One is to know its nature, or a just humanity. Another is to know its place, or a spiritual materialism; and both these depend upon the unobstructed reach the soul attains between its now and its hereafter.

By and by man will know manhood better, mankind will understand humanity. The ancient challenge was,—know thyself. The Scripture and the Christian challenge is,—which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?

But there are two kinds of study alternative among men. The one tries to disguise the mind; the other, to discover it. There is a prevalent education which is only the furnishing or the putting on of stilts. There is much stilt walking learned in early life which is afterwards worn down on rocks and roads, unless, as sometimes happens, it snaps off sharply in a ragged crevice or a dismal hole. Now the fallacy, the self-perversion, lies in that quest of relative superiority which overlooks the value of the race, the worth of man. The tendency in man substitutes a

relative for an absolute aim, and so deluding him of the absolute, deceives him in the relative. To work at advantage, the mind must know its limits and its possibilities, as they describe its human nature. There will be all the difference between working under such a knowledge, and working without it, that there is between traveling and wandering. He who roves uncertainly over a plain ten miles square, is lost and utterly exhausted. He who traverses a road through such a space grows stronger as he goes.

When the mind does not know its limits, as they underlie its humanity, but incessantly struggles against them, mental activity is convulsion. Convulsion in the frame, is the abnormal power of the muscles resisting muscular laws, rejecting muscular symmetries, heeding only the throes of nervous irritation.

Convulsion is the lawlessness of nervous ganglions. And there is mind convulsion, a spurious action of the understanding, which strains and knots its ligatures of limits; its sinews of strength, and obeys the driving, maddening, fluids of the fancy.

The human race has not hitherto understood itself. It has therefore been so hard for the individual man to know his own humanity. But there stretches now around the student, a commanding vista of perception, because he can reach a higher plateau of observation. History scales the ranges, from the floor, the primitive strata of man's dust bed, to the cloud-capped mystery

of his approach to God. We have studied history, as if it never would be finished, as if it never could be climbed. We have expected every next age to publish a fresh book, when it could only issue a new chapter. History is only the Book of Man, in several numbers. The *Finis* shall be stamped presently. There is completeness, there is unity, in the treatise. The early ages were not so alien from us, nor so monstrous, as they seem to be in the mists of distance. The coming ages shall not be such strangers as we think. In the former, men were not demigods nor demons. In the latter, men shall still be men. There is Divinity in the treatise, too. God prints it with his Power Press. He is the Editor of Time who is the Author of Eternity.—History is the large family Bible of the race, around which generations gather, as in one room for prayers.

It is thus a moment of advantage which the thought now occupies in time. The individual mind can know itself when it recognizes the harmony between its here and its hereafter. The race can read its history only by the light of its destiny. It is no unimportant thing to stand thus far down in the development of man. On the one hand he may not expect too much of his nature, on the other he need not hope too little.

There are certain grand outlines of humanity which have disclosed themselves in these later centuries

They are landmarks now—and must be mapped—as charts must indicate capes on the coast.

Scrutinize the religious revolution which we call at large the Reformation. True, it was only the awakening and return of a principle which had once been lost, but that principle had been lost almost as soon as it had been given. The centuries had been hunting for it to and fro,—the bewildered, flagging centuries. That truth was the Maker's valuation of man as man, the Maker's explanation of him, with directions how to use him. That lost,—and man had been like a musical instrument to one who should essay to play it with a sledge hammer or use it as a weapon. That lost, and weak man had been to stronger man,—as if some hunter, who had never seen a little child before, should take it for fair game, and chase it like a timid rabbit, with his dogs. That valuation lost, which said that man is worthless dust in himself, but that man is worth so much to the king, whose purpose united him to himself,—that lost, and he lay there to be trodden under foot of time. But when that Gospel was recovered, when the dust and the rust which had accumulated in human neglect and defaced human integrity, were dashed off; when humanity stood forth cleansed, deciphered, glistening again; when that which had so long been tossed in fragmentary confusions of strife, buried under cumbrous piles of institutions, and entangled in gnarled rootings of supersti-

tious growths, was laid bare in its beauty and its value, the same precious metal, susceptible of the same radiant gleam, the same surpernal ringing; then man became rich in history, and history became rich in man. Then the student who had pondered his heavy exchanges of synthetic dogma, or shaped his bits of leathern logic, could undertake a wider commerce and amass a noble fortune.

The Revolution in Great Britain, and the American Independence, are only sequels in the story. There is a logical relation of events like these. There is a generation of governing minds upon the earth, and a family likeness among them. There is a lineal descent of nobles, whose orders of nobility are not worn upon the robe but beneath the vest. It is as impossible to ignore the revelation God has made of man, as to discard the researches of science on the globe. One poet sings,—a man's a man for a' that,—who can not tell the meaning nor the mystery of manhood, just as a parrot cries a word he can not spell, just as romance sings the stars, knowing not their spatial magnitudes nor their cosmical magnificence.

Another songster shouts,—an honest man's the noblest work of God,—distrustful that he who made a man could make a nobler one, ignorant that the first man was of the earth earthy, but the second man, the Lord from heaven. So, one who sees a noble hill brow in his native landscape, pronounces it the

loftiest to be seen, which, in a partial sense, is true. But he sees not that there is a mountain, which can clasp, and kiss, and marry the blue beautiful beyond, parent of silver streams, householding heaven on earth.

But the inarticulate has found voice. The instinct of humanity has become pure reason. Logic itself has transcended the stairs it built, and gazes now out of its intuitional window upon the Absolute, the Infinite. It may rest quietly upon the sill which God's hand hewed for its repose. It need not leap dizzily into the inane, to dash itself against the profound. The human race has almost learned the lesson of its nature. Man can almost understand his fellow-man. Man can almost syllable that matchless harmony,—I am that I am, and understand his God.

Man stands forth at last from the mists and phantasms of his first ignorance. He stands out now from the flounderings and the falls of his early history. He stands aside from the delusion of the Devil,—Ye shall be as gods. He stands up from the dismay into which that delusion cast him down. He stands still—no longer claiming rivalry with heaven. He stands here, with his feet on the earth. But he stands here, with his brow towards the sky. Not to be a slave—a man was never made to be a slave. Not to be a thing—a man could never be a thing. Not to be a brute—man was made to have dominion over brutes.



Not to be an angel—an angel could not occupy the earth. But to be a man.

The fact is growing plainer. The strain is waxing clearer. The last, the least, the lowest, and the lost—anywhere, everywhere, a man can be a man.

That question of ages is the age answer, is to be the age fact.

Some shriek it wildly. Some stammer it confusedly. Some spell it painfully. Some falter at it tediously. Some hiss it and hoot it feebly. But the age shall master it. The age shall pronounce it presently aloud. God Almighty says it, and the earth shall say, Amen. Reforming causes are turning over prostrate men as they lie there prone and powerless, joining hands to lift the fallen pillars of humanity from their chaotic mire, and when the languid Cynic cries, Let it go—Let it be—Let us see,—one can hear the chorus, as of sailors tugging at the sails in tempests,—a man can be a man for ever,—a man can be a man,

One sees firm phalanxes of liberty approaching to the bars of cruel power, and wrenching off cage doors, and hemming in the tyranny of earth, as hunters hem the lion in, saying,—if a man can be a man for ever, let a man be a man.

But a further step by which the human mind shall reach its vantage ground, is to know its place. The full octave of its harmony is the chord between mind

and matter. Matter is here, and has been here as long as mind. The two have waged an internecine war, a war most savage and unnatural. Neither can be exterminated. They will both live here. They must learn to live together.

Now there have been three eras in this struggle. There have been three dynasties of Materialism usurping sway over the human soul, against each of which there has been also the responsive struggle of the mind, and from each of which there has been an escaping remnant, an exodus. The first tyranny which the material realm sets up over the spirit of man is the force of superstition. The counter force is symbolism. In early history you can trace this struggle. The mind is free and quick upon the one hand, and upon the other the material world is sublimely fresh. The mind essays to look through the material by symbol, by suggestion. The material drags and detains the mind in superstition, as the eyesight is deluded looking through stained or distorted lenses, as low, wicked inns at which a traveler stops, drug him, and rob him, and sometimes murder him.

Fancy fluttered and shuddered to escape through the material, beyond, beyond ;—so Poetry awoke.

Romance tore its garments and took wounds willingly to escape the degradation. So arose Tragedy. And while here and there a mind could use matter as a servant, quelling it by queenly mien, and ruling it

by charm of spiritual chastity, so that there ensued a harmonious life and an obedient symbolism,—yet, for the most part, Matter lived a fierce, savage life, a race of beasts in the forests, that sallied forth for prey, and when gorged slunk to dens. The world was resonant with roars of its heroes, and dismal with the howlings of its victims. The crash of bones and the screams of destruction, by noonday and by night, told that it was still a wilderness.

Afterwards, there came the sluggish era of Materialism, in its sensual aspect. The soul was to live only in the life of nature. The same sort of life which a toad lives in the heart of a rock, immured through its century, not struggling there, but dreaming quietly—or as a torpid fish, in quiet under the frozen river. Against this there wrestled a spiritual asceticism, pounding and tearing the flesh, to let the spirit through. But only now and then, in all that violence, could the soul escape. It is vain for men to try to live in mid air—they were made with feet and not with wings. It is vain for men to stare at the sun at noonday—they are made with eyes that can be dazzled and grow blind.

Then ensued the struggle of Mammonism, or the Activity of material life.

It proposed and still proposes, to keep the mind so employed in material services, so exhausted in physical engagements, that when it is still it will not

think, but only sleep, like a pack-horse exhausted from the harness, who will not run away upon the road side, glad to nibble at the road-side grass; like a slave who will not plot escape at night, plotting only for the hoeecake and the rice, and tumbling to repose.

Mammonism is the present tyrannous boast of the Material over the Immaterial and Immortal. And the counter force which many reach, has only been Religionism, or the effort to coerce or stimulate the tired soul every night to extra thought of God and heaven, when it can be spared from the burdens of the sensuous world. It is wonderful in truth how much the mind accomplishes of prayer to God after it has been all day out at work in dust. It is wonderful how much it seems to be transformed in the flutter and the flash, at some evening party of the skies, from its homespun raiment and careworn look, and from the day's demands.

But there lies before us, there lies next to us, an era of emancipation, an era of regenerate materiality.

The fallacy has been in the attempt to annihilate the material vesture of the soul. Matter is to have its windows. Matter is to be a transparent window. The approaching era which we have already touched is the revealing and redemptive era of the material world.

When its nature shall be well interpreted and its hieroglyphics keyed, matter shall say to mind, God made me also, and I shut none out from God.

We can already touch the fringes of ethereal substance. It is under their God's command that Astronomy, Physiology, Geology, have ventured forth from their familiar coasting grounds, as those old Spanish barks ventured out of sight of land, to find a better country and a newer world. We have learned in electric and magnetic studies, to discern occult harmonic currents which we can scarcely name, as children know objects and implements, the terms of which they can not pronounce. But the voice of God is heard above all these things, speaking of new heavens and a new earth. He who has worn our nature, assures us that there are bodies celestial as well as bodies terrestrial. In all the history of the human development, in all the records of regenerate life, we hear him speaking still, as if his sentence were not yet fulfilled, but interrupted in the midst,—Let us make man in our own image and after our likeness.

In all the quivers of the globe beneath us, and in all the bending of the firmament above us, we hear him saying still,—Let there be light.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SOUL BEAUTY.

CLAIMS OF GOD'S WORKS.—PHYSICAL BEAUTY TRACED.—A SELF-FITNESS.—UNITY OF BEAUTY IN CREATION.—SEPARATE SUGGESTIONS.—SOUL BEAUTY VITAL, NOT ORNAMENTAL.—BEAUTY OF PERSON ADMITS LIMITED ORNAMENT.—THE LANDSCAPE.—OVER-DRESSED UGLINESS SEEN IN THE FACE.—BEAUTY OF SOUL IN REPOSE.—CULTURE IN SORROW.—PLACIDITY.—TRUE SLEEP.—ACTIVE CHAEMS.—WALKING OR LIMPING, SWIMMING OR FLOUNDERING.—THE CANAL AND THE RIVER.—GEMS OF HEREAFTER.—PRINCIPLE A PRODUCT OF FAITH.—THE NOVELIST'S PLOT NOT A PRINCIPLE.—BUILDINGS OF CHARACTER NOT GROWTHS.—VITALITY IN CHRIST, AND ITS GLOW.—IMPORT OF TERRESTRIAL BEAUTY SPIRITUAL.—ANGELIC FACE.—NATURAL SCENERY.—GOD'S VOICE.—SIGHT OF GLORY TRANSFIGURING.—SPECTACLES OF BEAUTY.—COTTAGE DEATH-BED.—THE STRUGGLING CHRISTIAN.—THE SIGHT VIEWED FROM ON HIGH.

THE works of God combine their substantial value with their attractive charms. It is the law of nature. The landscape which encloses your life with its supply, enchants your eye with its vista. The sky which overhangs you with its blessing, at once subdues and exalts you by its grandeur. The tender grass that grows to grain, gleams in verdure. The stream that quenches thirst, ripples and sparkles in the sunshine. It is so in the life of the soul,—the faith strength that girds it for work, adorns it with graces and fits it for glory.

There is a new nature germinating in and through the second man. The thought is stilling itself lake-

like beneath a Saviour's countenance, while that Saviour's smile glasses itself in the depths of the thought. Genuine religion is a formative process, a reshaping in the image of God. It is not a mechanism, compelling the heart by a foreign force. It is a chemistry, vitalizing its core and reproducing its essence. This formation may be considered in its practical service—then we call it righteousness. It may be treated in its prospects—then we call it wisdom. Or it may be admired in its beauty—and then we call it holiness.

And what is beauty—physical beauty? How can the same secret spell flit on the human face, and flutter on the wing of the butterfly;—dance in the shiver of leaves, wave in the grass of the meadow, and broaden over the arch of the skies;—dimple in the cheek of a babe, and gleam in the crest of the billow;—tip the wing of a bird, and spread the strata of clouds;—tint the violet in the valley, and streak the shell in the surf;—empurple the grape in the cluster, and shadow the brow of the mountain;—describe a palace in the city, and a rustic cottage;—speak in a painting on the wall, and sparkle on a jewel in the sand?

Natural beauty is wholly indescribable, in terms, of feature, or of arbitrary law. It is a certain charm of relation. It is the harmony of being. And if you should study long, perhaps the nicest definition you

could give of physical beauty would be to the effect that it is such a quality in things as most promptly bespeaks the praise of the maker. Beauty can not be any one physical aspect in all things, since it varies in all; and a hill can be beautiful as well as a tree, and a stone as well as a flower, and a meadow as well as a face. That can be beauty in one, which is blemish in another. Green on the grass is admirable, but green in the eye is disfiguring. White snow is gladsome and pure, but white lips are impure and cadaverous;—the blue of the firmament enriches on your vision, but if the sun should turn blue, it would be a spectacle of death—the first shadow of gathering blackness, and a throb of extinction.

Beauty, then, differs in every separate object as the work of its own God. And yet, in each and all, it is so the same beauty, that a child's glance can seize it, and a child's voice proclaim it.

So that if we were challenged for the proof that Creation, like Redemption, has one Author and one Finisher, we could fetch our argument of design, not so much in the usual way, from the uses and benefits to which creation adapts itself, and not so much from the laws of proportion, and the laws of adjustment by which it is swayed, as from the unbroken sweep of its harmony, and the mathematical curve of its beauty, and the ceaseless, undisturbed play of shapes and shades endlessly diversified, yet nowhere disjointed.



And we could confute all the pretentious babblings of modern pedantry, about different centers and different periods of creation, and all loose theories of spontaneous development, as if there had been many deities at work on their elements—as if creation had been a factory full of whirring wheels and whanging hammers, rather than the universal voice of God in the calm—we could refute them all, by pointing to the flush of common beauty and the mellowing of kindred charm in which all things repose, revealing a single plastic hand, a single presiding power.

While Law separates creatures to rank, and class, and uttermost individualism, Beauty adjusts them to mutual bearing, in their reference to a common origin, girding them with one horizon, and enfolding them with one embrace, one bathing ether, one sleeping light. If the lily and the rose are kindred in their charm of flowerhood, however contrastive in their tints, there is the same reach of relationship between all objects that enchant the heart with suggestions of material beauty. The ripple of the lake has a strange, indescribable likeness to the star twinkle. There is the print of the same finger on it—the same artificer's sign manual.

There is something alike suggestive in the song-bird's trill, and the voice of man—in the whisperings of trees, and the shouts of the sea. The plumage of tropical birds is gorgeous with the same idea that

glistens from the sea-gull's wings on the ice-bound shore. There is a mystic analogy between the flat, spreading prairie, and the sharp, craggy peak. You are somehow sure that he who made the one would make the other, though you can not tell why. You know not which to admire the most, because neither is most to be admired, because both are as strangely akin as they are strangely diverse. You are already and instinctively convinced, that throughout space, invisible things, as well as visible, things near and remote, things here and hereafter, are all noted and melodied within this elemental law of beauty; so that there is a unison of the creation, and a cosmical completeness of the universe.

Now, the only life beauty, the only soul beauty, must be interior and essential. It must be a vital charm, as contradistinguished from whatever is ornamental. It must not be mere elegance of superadded attire, although there can be no reason why that should not be afterwards supplied by the adjustments of moral culture, and even the æsthetics of spiritual taste. Beauty of person, as we know, will bear tasteful and becoming decoration. But it will neither choose, nor bear, exaggerated array. Its own taste is its best standard. Whereas an uncomely face, or an ungraceful form, studying most intensely, is most disfigured by its study of robes and jewels, and all artificial fashions. It is so in the scenery of nature. The sweetest

landscape may be enhanced by a culture, the grouping of trees or the planting of flowers. But its harmony will bear no arbitrary enforcements. And the noblest pictures of the globe are such as need no landscape gardening, and submit to no architectural tutelage.

- Wild flowers, nursed too carefully, may become monsters.

Chaste adorning, whether of the person or the home, has for its law the simple perception and the simple encouragement, of that beauty which is already there in essence. Painting and statuary, art studies of any class, are genuine so far as they reveal truth already in existence. It must be so in soul life. Soul beauty must be the beauty of holiness. No robe of temporal moralism can become a spirit in the light of a life to come. It is all one to smear the human face with paint, and to daub the human heart with attractions that must be washed off in death.

Flounces and ribbons, head-dresses and jewelries here, can not make the loveliness of spheres beyond. Often, when you have seen one walking before you, in the rustle of robes and the flaming of hues, and the flutter of feathers, you have been eager to catch a glimpse of the face. Somehow you expected a harmony of exquisiteness. But the first peep told you of weazen features and scrawny skin, of red flustered visage and a soured glance. And so we are disappointed in the aspect of lives as seen from behind,

while they pass us by in the trappings of time—intention and the ostentation of moral array. But the world beyond, to which they pass, gets the front view, and sees the features of the countenance.

Spiritual life, in its repose, has a peculiar beauty. There is a charm in its passive condition, as well as a poetry of motion in its outgoings. Holiness considered in its stillness, is to holiness considered in its stirs, what a sylvan scene is to a highway; or what a sleeping child form is, to the agile step of a graceful woman on the floor, or a mechanic's sturdy arm lifted at his work.

The display and the development of this passive beauty is the great lesson of all sorrow in the new-born soul. Trial is the distillation process of patience. Patience settles into peace. There is an especial peace which is the amber of a clarified transparent patience. Life here becomes the secure tranquillity of hereafter begun. It is only when the Finite reposes in the Infinite that true placidity is reached. Placidity then is no longer partial, but perfect. It is no longer a relative state among relative states, but, in its measure, absolute, in its comprehension of the absolute. The creature can repose only on the fondness of the Creator, as birdlings can sleep only under the mother's brooding wing. Immortal life can find its sweet sleep in this world when there are underneath it the everlasting arms. You can never see it in pro-

found rest otherwise. All its rest otherwise, is like that momentary posture, that shifting process through which one wearies himself in slumberous snatches on a feverish couch. It distresses you more to witness them, and they distress the sufferer more than to be up and doing, or wide awake, and talking. But the beauty of holiness is the perfect peace of the realms hereafter reaching over the region here. There are no stirs of anxiety or starts of alarm. The chamber is sacred from intrusion,—the other chambers are all under the same care. You do not have to think of what perils may be alert in the streets, of what robber and assassin powers may lurk in the remoter shadows of the Universe. The Almighty takes care of all that. There is no fear of the future, there is no care of the morrow, there is the very sweetness of repose.

This is a beautiful attitude of finite life. To know that your work, insignificant and ineffectual in itself, is treasured in the working of the Almighty, invests your work with the evening charm that exults in the protecting mystery of night, and the morning charm that refreshes itself for the uncertainty of the day.

Beauty of spiritual repose enhances the charm of activity in its turn. For it is a consequence of that repose, that the soul's exertion is not the soul's exhaustion. The duties and the achievements of spiritual life are graceful because they are natural. Vital

efforts, are wholly different from unnatural strainings and stretches. There is the same distinction as between penances and repentances. There is the same distinction, as between walking firmly and limping painfully. There is the same difference, as between the gracefulness of a swimmer, and the plungings and gasps of one who has fallen into the sea.

The tenor of life, ruled by machinery of temporal moralism, and coerced to virtuous courses, is the flow of a canal, measured in its dingy basin, and ruled in its artificial locks. Spiritual life is the rippling of a soul river between its undulating banks and beneath its rejoicing trees.

Thoughts that drop from hereafter, and stud the breast of this life, lie here like gems in the sands. They are ornaments of the earth. But they are manufactures of a hidden power and of untold ages.

Such truths from eternity exhibited in time, are the only principles which the touchstone of reason can verify.

A principle must spring from a living faith. It must take hold of some everlasting truth. Suppose man to be only an effervescence of the clay—a moth brought into being by the summer prime of the present, to shrivel when the sun goes down;—suppose him to have no hereafter, and never to come to his God, and what has he to do with any principles? How can he reach any point of principle? Suppose him

to say to himself,—I will not steal, I will not lie. Suppose him to say even more, I will practice benevolence, I will devote myself to the good of my race. Why should he not lie? What good is there for him or for his race? How is benevolence possible among a swarm of ephemeral insects? What will it matter the next day when the whole swarm is swept away by the breeze, and trodden in the dust of the highway? Imagine a school of fish caught in a net, and one most expert of them all, teaching the rest how to swim among the meshes. Is not his cunning attainment—his ludicrous plight? Imagine a cattle herd on their way to the slaughter, mincing their pace gracefully, and one rescuing another from a pitfall by the way. Imagine a group of felons on the same scaffold, adjusting their mutual rights, and parading their fidelity to one another while the breath shall be in their bodies. And it must be confessed, that if man's relations to God be ignored, and man's hope of a hereafter be annulled, there is no ground for principle. You can not tell, in that case, what you mean by principle. We speak, it is true, of the essential and immutable law of right and wrong. And the force of that law centers in the very core of man's being. But that law is inextricably inwrought with man's sense of his God. That law is pursuing every spirit to intrinsic holiness or spiritual death. After all, there can be no such thing to a finite creature as ab-

stract right and wrong. Right in him is to answer the end of his Creator, and show forth his praise. All else must be wrong. All else must be vain and void. And if the paganism that obscures the revelation of God debases the moral power of man, and if infidelity that refuses revelation paralyzes his being, it is no less true, that the unbelief which ignores his gospel, reduces virtue to a fiction, and morality to a form. Novelists invent a principle for their heroes and heroines, by making the whole story bend to the sequel of the plot. Virtue comes out singularly triumphant at last, from all its temptations and all its distresses. And crafty vice and cruel oppression meet a just overthrow in the end. To many men, existence is a sort of a novel, with a vague plot running through it, in which—honesty is the best policy, and—one praises the bridge that carries him over, and—all's well that ends well, and—he is wise who wins, and—a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and a—stitch in time saves nine—and, a man strives to be something, and to do something, he scarcely knows what, he scarcely thinks why.

There is not much beauty in all this. Passing in and out among men, every one of whom is choice and chary of his reputation, you are not so much struck with surprise and delight after all. Every man is testy, and sensitive to the least blame. Yet you do not stop to admire moral scenery, as you pause in the



field or the forest. You are rarely compelled to hold your breath for very enchantment.

There is a system of character builded, not planted. It is an architecture instead of a life. The effort of habit, the study of books, the contemplation of example,—are all busily plied. The plumb line of custom is drawn. The chisel of education is at work. The plane of refinement smoothens the planks. The roof of propriety is reared, and the columns of taste stand erect. The house will be neat enough, and shapely, in the fashion of the houses around it. The fashion varies in different periods and countries.

There is unquestionable symmetry in these acquired characters. They are often of fair proportions. They are susceptible of great improvement. They rise sometimes to a lofty height. They may be stately and splendid, like marble mansions. They may be modest like frugal cabins. They may be prominent and commanding, like the city palace. They may be sweetly picturesque, like the sylvan cottage. But they have no vitality. They have no permanence. They have not the beauty of the oaking acorn. They have not the beauty of the blading grass spear. Theirs is not the beauty of holiness. The principles of acquired character are loose piles after all. A man says to himself,—I will be honest, I will be honorable, I will be kind. You ask him again, Why? To what end? Because it is right? What is right? Because

it is safe? We will be safe enough in our graves. Because we will be more esteemed after we die. How long after we die will we be esteemed at all? Because of the future world? But what hold have we there? Are we sure of ultimate life after all our good deeds, by all our good traits? The finest houses crumble. The strongest houses are torn down in the futures of time. If you would send branches into the sunshine of God's countenance, you must take root in the ground of God's word. If you would grow up to the skies you must be planted first low in the dust. Worldly morality is wise self-seeking. Holiness is wiser self-renouncing. Life stirs and shoots in the smile of a Saviour, as plants sprout in the springtide. Holiness is sweet nighness to a reconciled God. Morality is salutary dread of a God afar off. The divine life of Christ is suffusing the soul. There ensues soul health. Purity or soul-cleanness ensues. What we mean by a new heart is the love of a loving God plying a man, as the heart plies the pulse of the body. Soul vigor knits into muscle; we call it faith. Soul pleasure tingles in nerves; we call it peace. Soul readiness is on the alert. The man is born again. And so the beauty of holiness begins to flush and mantle the being, as the flush of dawn enriches the eastern sky. All terrestrial beauty was but the hint and the pledge of spiritual life. When among the throngs of human faces and the blaze of

worldly adorning, some face of exquisite mould, or of unutterable expression has leaped up to your gaze, as a bright bird leaps in forest shadows, as a gem gleams in the sand, what was the charm that riveted you then and haunted you long afterwards? It was because you seemed to be reminded in that look of something celestial. It is not unmeaning when beauty is described as angelic. No face is beauty to you, in life or in painting, which does not appear angelic, which does not whisper low of purity and peace, of truth and goodness. You may misread the face, but it wears a look of heaven, and that is the spell of its power. And when the scenery of nature sweeps your heart with its enchantment, so far as you are still a fresh, true-hearted beholder, not a furbelowed conceited critic, not a jaded, hackneyed admirer, when the mountain summit sublimates its stillness before you, an awe of draped majesty, a pedestal, a stalagmite of eternity; or when some gentle landscape, putting on its covering of twilight, sinks to sleep with the murmur of the stream and the song of the insect; or when you look out upon the broad, placid breast of the sea, or above into starry depths,—you know well enough that it is no mere physical sensation of beauty which entrances the heart, and no bald praise of creation which absorbs it; but the glimpse of the shadow of an inner spiritual effulgence, burnishing the wings of seraphim, and radiating from the throne of God. It is

that you seem to hear a sermon from the life of the Almighty, and to trace the footprints of his holiness. And if earthly beauty be its spirituality, the type and token looking up to that which is celestial, the beauty of holiness is celestial luster brooding on the earth.

And when the soul beholds the risen Son of God, it reflects his risen joy. And when, like Stephen, it is gazing steadfastly up into heaven, all they that see its face, shall see it, like Stephen's, as the face of an angel. And when, like Moses, it talks with God, like Moses, it shall have a dazzling countenance.

Holiness is rare enough upon the earth. Much that is esteemed such is a feeble semblance. And paste can not flash like a diamond. Yet here and there in the dusky world one sees the beauty of holiness.

We enter a cottage of the poor. The bare, knotted floor is scantily strewn with unmatched pieces of tottering furniture, and among odd delf and faded relics upon that rigid little shelf, a pallid clock ticks the weary hours, as if it tolled a knell. An old Bible lies upon the stand, tarnished, as if that too had grown poor and gray. A pale candle falters in the corner of the hearth, as if too delicate to stare upon the scantiness, and ashamed of its own flashes.

Stretched on the flat pillow lies the face of a quiet, cheerful sufferer—the wan hand content upon the coverlid. Have we reached the extremity of earthly lowliness? But, lo! we touch that rusty Bible; it

opens a spectacle of mystic transformation, like a secret spring. The eyes beam with such a look of rapture that the gaunt frame seems to soar, and the dusk room to quiver into a porch of Paradise. The old clock ticks as if it rang the chimes of heaven. It is nigh the glory hour. Dawn is flooding on the soul—and while yonder, in the sickly daubs and garish parades of vanity, men eye and ogle all semblance and show, there touch here the trailing skirts of heaven, and the beauty of holiness greets us.

You see a tempted Christian steadfast and struggling. His feet are often weary. His eyes are often blurred. His hands grow heavy sometimes and hang down. What to him are the applauses of men? What to him their reproaches? He will do them good if they love him. If they hate him, he will but do them good. His thoughts are astray among the joys of the Lord. His life is a quiet picture of heaven. Tempests blow upon him unforbidden. Storms pass over him unheeded. The world spreads before him its pomp and its glitter. He treads lightly over it all. It knits its brow into scowls, and raises its passionate hand to affright him. He walks forward with placid mien. Siren strains lure him to wayside bowers,—he stops his ears. Forbidden fruit-boughs overhang his path,—he steps aside. Sorrow showers break over his head,—he kneels to pray, and his pathway freshens and sparkles around him. And

now, as he recedes from their eyes, men cherish his memory. There come back upon the landscape of life the word of truth, the glance of love, the purpose of good, the patience of kindness, the voice of rebuke; the voice of entreaty, and many are gazing after him, and murmuring the melody of his memory,—even as when eyes that heeded not the majesty of noon-day, or shrank abashed from its splendor, follow the setting disk with inchoate longings, and catch with sad fondness the retiring rays that play lambently, in parting blessing, on the earth, when the broad orb himself is flooding now another hemisphere. If it be a beautiful thing to see a brave swimmer, swimming from wreck, spread the buffeting billows under his panting chest, and stroke their crests into submission behind him, until he stands erect on the shore; if it be a noble thing to see the sturdy peak of the mountain loom out at last in its fullness, unshattered by the tempests, unstained by the darkness that raged and reveled around it; if it cheer us to see the morning bursting unquenched from the clasp of the midnight—what must be the vision which breaks on yonder coasts when the struggling, gasping saint, long watched and waited for with countless, serried eyes—waited for in breathless expectation when he fell, when he floundered, when he sighed and groaned, when he sank and disappeared—waited for eagerly still, and joyously watched when he shook

away the cleaving drops of sin, and leaped through the plunges of sorrow, and mounted the crests of temptation, and withstood the pitiless torrents of trouble—comes leaping and shining at last, all the way from the earth to the skies, all the way from destruction to perfect redemption, all the way from the shadows of death to the blaze of life everlasting.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### FOOTPRINTS OF DEPARTURE.

LIFE VIEWLESS UNTIL FINISHED.—ACTS CONCEALING THEMSELVES.—FRAUD.—SILLINESS, ETC.—CONSCIENCE A CLOCK.—GOOD DEEDS.—WORDS UNDER PEN.—CRUMBS OF BREAD.—EXAMPLE SLOW IN ITS TEACHING.—INVISIBILITY OF INFLUENCE.—ULTIMATE SCOPE OF DUTY.—HEREAFTER TO HIGHER BRINGS.—THE PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCE.—THE STAIR-CASE WITH A SECRET SPRING.—GAME TRACKS.—FUGITIVE.—THE STRUT.—THE GIDDY SKIP.—VOLATILE HEEDLESSNESS.—THE CARRION BIRD TRACK.—THE PILGRIM FOOT.—THE PATH MAKING OF FAITH.—THE BEATEN TRACK OF LIFE.—FOOTPRINTS OF THE CREATOR.—FOOTPRINTS OF THE CREATURE.

WE may not pause at any point of this life and take its retrospect. Our full lives here are to be visible in our finished lives hereafter.

There is an utterance of the weary old patriarch Job, in his pensive plaint before God, which registers at once a philosophic fact and a religious sentiment seldom appreciated. It has in it a blended tone of dirge and prophetic triumph, like the sigh of the wind, stirring the dead leaves and limbs in the stirrs of spring.

Thou settest a print on the heels of my feet.

We pause sometimes in a path to scan our own footprints, and it is too late to remodel or retrace them.



So all our life tracks are heel prints.

Human deeds and human lives are never understood until they are finished. You can no more tell in advance how manhood will turn out, than how a child will grow up. You can tell something in either case—in either case there is something untold.

Man must be unpacked like a parcel, piece by piece.

All that he really sees of himself is what comes next. All he need ask is, what now? That will give him enough to think about, and enough to do.

When a deed is done, when a life is finished, it is marked—each one leaves its mark behind it.

God has so ordered it, that the last impression is the permanent imprint. One seldom sees what he is doing. There is something in the act of pressing forward which hides the present in looking for the future.

If under strong temptation I commit a fraud, I shall be so bewildered by the temptation as to be confused about the fraud.

The intoxication of pleasure seems rational at the time, just as a drunken babbler grows pompous in his stutterings. A chatterer does not see how silly he is; when men laugh at him, he thinks they are laughing with him. When they frown on his nonsense, he thinks they have grown stupid and dull.

It is seldom that a cruel man sees himself to be

cruel ; his cruelty blinds his eyes to think itself a justice. At any rate, a mean man never thinks himself mean—there is no such instance ; a mean man only thinks himself cautious, just as a near-sighted person seems to be looking far away.

There is vast mistake made about what we call conscience. Conscience is like a clock ; it is meant to indicate soul time. But a man can set his conscience, or he can let it run down.

Now and then you find a very vigilant housekeeper who keeps time advanced for the house, being just a little righteous overmuch, as an incessant rebuke to the servants and stir to the visitors.

Some are always pointing out so much excellence for others. Most men let their time-pieces run irregularly.

That only is a true chronometer of spiritual life below which draws from on high its astronomic time.

Conscience is a truth teller in its nature, as all language is. Like language, it can be forced to falsehood by the subterfuges of its etymology.

It is just as true of good deeds as of evil. They are words under the writer's pen. The writer does not see them until the pen is lifted. No one sees his syllables that are coming. One syllable more or less makes a meaning difference. A gift of alms in its ultimate accomplishment is not estimated. It may be but a crumb of bread to satisfy a beggar's hunger but

that morsel of bread shall be to him a morsel of hope. That crumb of food may be a crumb of thought that shall keep his soul from starving, and revive his life to better purpose. His better purpose may make his children better men—and who shall trace it out? It is said, Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days. Sometimes the very intensity and generous force which throws it sends it far, so that it does not come up to the surface until a long time afterwards.

But when you have gone home, then it is floating back again, a buoyant cargo of rescue and return.

The man who has dispensed with some indulgence in order to build a hospital or an asylum, owns a stock in the beneficent speculation, and draws his dividend only when the assets and earnings of that undertaking shall be put together. It will be a long time at compound interest. All this is especially true of good or bad example. We never can tell what our example is doing. The power of it is deeper than that of our words, and therefore its flow is less rapid. We can see the water run from a spout very vehemently; but the rolling current of the deep-breasted river moves quietly.

You can teach a voluble lesson of words in a little time. But example is like the lesson which a picture teaches,—it grows upon you softly, and it grows upon you all the while.

Of one thing we may all be certain,—that friends de-

parted, whenever we listen to them, speak in deeper, richer tones than when they were here. A mother can never do so much for her wayward son, by all the prayers and tears of her life, as her calm, pale-faced ghost does afterwards. And the great and the good, the heroes of history, the saints of the church, are more potent in their influence now than they ever were when present. In their lives they gave a largeness, as a man may make presents here and there. In their deaths they gave a legacy of their lives, as a man leaves his children the heirs of his all.

Whether good or ill, there's nothing which a man does in his life, that does not live after him. He can therefore see it only in part.

If he build a house, it is a dwelling place for many. If he plant an orchard, its fruit is for other hands. If he write a book, he lights a flame to shine or to burn. If he knit a secret heart-tie, some fragment, some thread of it, shall linger behind him.

He can not step without leaving an impression. He can not stop to determine the impression which he leaves; he can not set his foot down and mark just before him the complete action, the rounded attainment, the satisfied development; for before the footprint is made, he is pressing on, making another and another. He knows it is there—he can not tell just what it is. Each one has studied this feature of his life. Conscience is sturdy; memory is clear.

And yet it is so hard for you to tell just where you stand, and just what you are. It is harder still, it is next to impossible, to tell what you have done, to know what you are doing. The thought is sometimes dispiriting to those who endeavor to do good. Am I succeeding or failing? Am I a blessing or a waste in the world? Do I gain or lose? He who is pertest to answer, is often saddest at fault, like a school child in a haste to hold up his slate.

But the registry is imprinted by the step of departure.

The divine will reveals itself as the absolute, the ineffable will,—claiming human duty not to present results, but to eternal principles, and so linking and lifting the soul by the pendent Here to the over-spreading Hereafter. This is the law of attaction in the moral spheres of the finite which binds them to the infinite. It has sway, beyond a doubt, over other intelligences. Their present is in some sort sphered in concentric orbit with their invisible future. We at least upon this earth must act without seeing what we are doing until it is done.

Consider the effect of this law,—None of us liveth to himself.

The notion that virtue is its own reward, and that vice is its own punishment, is thoroughly exploded. You might as well say that when a man has planted a tree, he has tasted its fruit.

There is distinctness in spiritual things; there is no possible escape from God.

The theory that every blow and every gesture lingers for ever in the air, an ærial fossil, may be a fancy flight. But to delude one's self, is not to delude the universe.

In some exhibitions of entertainment, at which a ticket of admission is required, the stair-case is unguarded, the doorway is neglected, and it appears to intruders as if they could step slyly in unobserved, and escape the entrance demand. No one appears to be watching them, so they spring nimbly to the door, and attempt to glide in. But just as they reach it the sentinel confronts them, and exacts their ticket of entrance. There are others, who propose to enter legitimately, but they look up and see no one waiting to receive them, and so think it must be a wrong time of day, or that they mistake the place, or that it is all over, or that they have been deluded in some way. Now it so happens, as you may have noticed, that there is sometimes a little cord, or wire, under the step, attached elsewhere to a bell,—and that cord takes note of every step upon the stairs, and takes note of nothing else; and that bell answers every one who reaches a certain point, when he least expects it. A homely but a truthful emblem this. Some men think to slip into the galleries of glory with their undetected sin, and lives unticketed of gospel; for heaven seems as

cheap to them as if the All-seeing God kept no lookout, and cared not for his palaces.

And some there are who would enter in on his own terms, but see no one there to welcome approach. Let both understand that the step upon the stairs will tell it, though they see it not. But it will not tell at all, until they reach a certain point. He who tries to come to God by gospel claim, finds a God come to meet him in his gospel faithfulness. And he who tries to elude God, in ungospelled subtlety, will find a God face to face in his gospel frown. He will find him thus when it is too late to retreat. No man lives to himself or by himself, no man lives for naught; to say it, is to dispraise the Being who made him. There are many striving hard to live for themselves, to live as if they had no fellows, to live as if there were no God. They get credit for the purpose, they get no credit of success. There are men living a time life, a flesh life, pertinaciously, as if to take their daily oath that there is no spirit life, that there can be no eternity. Yet they live to the uses of eternity, they live to the exhibitions of eternity, they live to God. Life leaves its mark behind it as a way of disclosure.

The hunter's eye can tell the game by its tracks. Amid the hosts of the forest each one shows his own footprint, shaped or sized just so;—the natives of the forest learn to distinguish friend and foe, stranger and familiar, by the trail. Many a fugitive from justice has

been told by his print on the fleeting sand, or the more fleeting snow. A thief fleeing away on a stolen animal, has been traced and detected by the mark of a single fresh nail in the shoe of the beast. So many an errant and evasive life discovers its own intent, and betrays its evil heart.

The life print is always in the heel and not in the toe. It is under you and not over you; it is behind you and not before you. Hither comes one who steps jauntily and strides bravely. He is ever making quick steps; he is on the strut of great undertaking. But the glance overhead scans his path, and if you look closely you shall see it, too; he has made his mark, a miserably weak and selfish tread, the crunching track of a sordid and beggarly aim. Hither comes the slipshod life, purposeless and slovenly, and the mark which it impresses is a sad disfigurement, as of strength run down at the heel. Yonder skips the light dancer in a trifle life, that seems so graceful for its giddiness, so harmless for its folly, as if bent on making others smile by its incessant scamper. But if you scan its heel prints, you find a sharp, short squirm of vanity, the distortion of a step, as odious to the angels, in its conceit of beauty, as the pinched foot of the Chinese to us. Yonder, a dainty slippered, volatile spirit flies over the surface of his sphere. He says he is so buoyant. He says he is so impulsive. He says he is so enthusiastic. What does he not say? But



he chooses to be held to no account. He has no time to plod in service. He could not walk in furrows. He says he has no influence. He says,—just let me go. He says he is not his brother's keeper. He says that you must take him as you find him. Aha, he says; see, I am off again, I am out of sight. Aha, aha, naught to me is your struggling, suffering cause; naught to me are your religions. And, look you, as he leaps he leaves every time, not a footprint, but a rude scar upon the earth, a horrid, ghastly deformity, at every interval a flurry print, a flounder mark,—to tell men that he was a knave, to tell God that he is a fool. Next comes one, creeping softly and purring smoothly all the while, looking blandly round him in a sinuous and dexterous life, thinking to escape the notice of all by his frisking pleasantries and his bounding forms of goodness. But he escapes notice in all except his scratches in the sand, his jerked clutches of the dust, one foot at a time. These he leaves behind him. The man of business, whose energy and toil have no other than an earthly aim, is seen pacing, pacing, day by day, and when you come to inspect the heelprints, they are the dints in the stone, where prisoners have paced their cells day after day, and worn the floor.

You see a statesman or an author, a teacher or a ruler, approaching in such majesty and lighting on the ground with such dignity, like a noble, a kingly bird; but you look at his tracks, and they are cruel

gripping claws, to tear the poor and needy. He was, after all, a bird of prey, and a low, carrion bird.

You see men standing high in the church and in the social scene, and walking with mighty tread, as if they had tallness of growth; but if you will look further, you will see that they only wore the high heels of a dandy show. The crowd passes on; the false show vanishes, the character remains; lies drop out, the truths they printed, live.

It is a noble thought for those who live here in virtue of a life to come. Before the Christian pilgrim lies a wilderness. Around him winds toss the sands. He has no tracks of his own to rely upon. He can only trust in God. He must walk by faith and not by sight. But behind him are his traces—and his works do follow him.

Quiet Christian, walking softly, walking meekly, walking patiently,—he sees nothing in himself to praise—nothing that he has apprehended. He reaches forth. But there is a path which he is making all the while. God sees it, and they who come after him shall see it. He is making a path from his earthly home to a heavenly home—expressly for his children to follow. They will make it plainer for his children's children. Every time he goes to the throne of the God-Man, he leaves a deeper and a plainer imprint.

When from the presence of the Lord he goes to

the bedside of the sick, the cabin of the poor, he leaves a path from the bedside of the sick, the cabin of the poor, the more perspicuous, to the gate of God. The way of life through this thicketed wilderness is plainer and more marked, every time an humble, hearty pilgrim soul goes through. The trodden track of patient suffering and persistent pleading is beaten into the sure and certain road—the highway now of triumph. The Son of God broke the road. His human friends have followed on in all ages. We follow them.

And there is to be an exhibition of this tracery. Something has been written lately about the footprints of the Creator. The testimony of the rocks has been cited. The very stones that flag these walks are tracked and written by the feet of living creatures. The caverns of the earth—the ocean beds—are printed by them. The Creator's footprints of creating glory and ordaining care are registered by the steps of little insects and the stride of mammoths. The tracery of plants that grew on this globe ages ago—the delicate veinings of their leafage, the graceful slightness of their stems, are packed steadfastly in these strata. They tell how God took heed of beauty—how God set memorials of time. They make the herbarium of the Almighty, the anatomical museum of the Most High.

But what are these things to the records of the

New Creator's work? The true church of God has always been a fugitive and exiled church upon this globe. It has always marked its way with weary pilgrim feet, with hasty flying feet. But he has set a print upon its heels.

A way of sorrow, spotted with the blood drops, as was his way to Calvary. A way of weariness, as he sank beneath the cross. A staggering way of temptation in the wilderness, like his. A solitary way, like his on Olivet. But it is a way of return—a splendid march of triumph.

And every track of suffering that followed him, shall come back a pace of glory. And every footprint of endurance shall blaze and jewel into a flush of luster. And every pause of prayer and patience melts into a radiance of peace and Paradise.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### COURAGE FROM BEYOND.

PHYSICAL COURAGE DEFINED AND DEFENDED.—NOT ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM MORAL.—REACH BEYOND CIRCUMSTANCES.—COUNTING THE HAZARD.—THE GUIDE.—THE CAPTAIN.—THE REGIMENT.—CASIBIANCA.—THE BOY MARTYR.—NATURE OF SPIRITUAL BRAVERY.—LIFE AFRAID OF GOD.—BRAVERY A RESTORED FELLOWSHIP.—CLOUDS HIDING THE SKY THEY SEEM TO BRING NEAR.—REASSURANCE IN NATURE.—INADEQUATE.—SCENERY OF PAGAN LANDS.—MIGHT OF SUPERSTITION.—IMMANUEL PRESENCE.—COURAGE OF WORK.—SPIRITUAL LIFE AS SEEN FROM WITHOUT AND FROM WITHIN.—EXHAUSTING TIMIDITY.—DIVINE EXACTIONS.—DIVINE GIFTS.—COURAGE OF DESTINY.—INVOLVED IN EACH CRISIS.—NIGHT LODGING TO THE JOURNÉL.—PEBBLE SENDING WAVE TO THE SHORE.—SHUTTING THE EYES ON DESTINY.—PROBLEMS AND PUZZLES.—SECURITY.—HOME AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST.

THERE is not a nobler trait than courage. Physical bravery is no mean attribute. Theoretically, we are given to undervalue it. Practically, we always admire it and prize it. Physical courage is not wholly physical. It involves a symmetry and fine play, of the nerves that knit the body to the soul.

A brave heart may dwell, it is true, in a body that dangles tremulously, and shudders piteously in the unstrung plight of its material fibers—as a strong man may lodge in a creaking hovel. It may not always be possible for the mind to brace itself against the shocks and jars of physical affright, any more than for the sailor to steady his hammock in the gale.

There are cases, too, in which exquisite organism of body outsteps the soul's susceptibility, and there is a sort of bodily fear which the soul is not yet aroused to confront and sustain. So that the body runs back to the soul, as the child runs to the father, and advances again with its hand in his.

But physical courage is really a quality of the mind, and not a blind material force. In the case of a brute you can distinguish courage from the ferocity, the brutality which may invest it. You see it in the wild beast's fury. But you see it still better in the obedient charger on the battle field—in the faithful watchdog at the door. In the case of a man, you can tell even material courage from its semblances and counterfeits,—such as the ignorance which detects no danger, or the stupor which is dead to it. In these last there is no more courage, than in the rock that defies the billow, or the peak that spurns the lightning shafts. A sound heart in a sound body will be brave. Bravery is itself a soundness.

A bad man may have courage in some things, but it lurks not in his badness; it is his redeeming trait. The stoicism of the savage is a savage virtue still. And however we may prate abstractly of moral excellence, or peace societies, a brave soldier is a noble man, and our hearts nod instinctively with the nodding plume of the hero.

Upon the other hand, contempt of cowardice is no

less instinctive. There is a whole mystery of guilt in cowardly conduct, which we do not clearly indict under counts, which yet we detest. An arrant coward is unfit to be trusted. We are satisfied that such an one is both treacherous and cruel,—that he will betray when he can, and oppress when he dares.

The distinction which we are in the habit of supposing between physical and moral courage, is therefore often arbitrary and fanciful. If the element common to both be thoroughly eliminated, it will appear that true courage is one and the same. In neither case is it an adventurous rashness. That is an excitement, which reacts in proportionate panic. It retreats in the very footprints of its advance. In neither case is it a bold blustering. True steel has its temper, and the best blade will bend with most ease. The metal that is stiff is also brittle. Raving gusts soon die away. It is not the impulse of occasion. There may be a circumstantial boldness, an accidental resolution, under stress of stimulus, or in the blank of despair. But so the drunken moth will dance in the fascination of the flame—so the trembling stag will turn at bay in the thicket. True courage, whether you style it physical or moral, resolves itself into an adequate purpose, a superiority to present limits. There is implied in it a sense of power over and beyond the individual power, as in the case where a single man maintains his post against great

odds, or where a weak woman encounters huge dangers to protect her children.

There is a prospect beyond the visible prospect, as where a dying mortal meets death calmly. Whether there be demanded the valor of undertaking, or the fortitude of endurance, which are but inversions of each other, the principle is the same. The being seems to arouse in an energy beyond its own. The heart appears to disregard hostile aspects, and to overlook unlikelihoods. Yet true courage always counts the peril—as an agile leap is always measured first, with a cool, clear eye.

Genuine bravery has an acute sensibility, a keen perception,—it takes deliberate aim. It wastes no prowess, it utters no defiant rhapsodies. No man is so versed in the perils of the desert as the keen-eyed guide. No man is so cautious and so scrupulous of the movement of the ship as the stout-hearted captain. No heart beats so fast in the battle, no eye seizes so many risks, as the eye, the heart of the commander, whose rigid muscles do not flutter, as he utters his stern monosyllables throughout the crisis. In such cases, courage is a power which strengthens in proportion to the jeopardy, as the tree root clings in the swaying hurricane. It is a prospect which vaults into more brilliance in the condensing gloom, as the firmament grows brighter in the dark of night.

What is this power? What is this prospect? It



is a sense of the fitness of things. It is a claim on the Infinite. In order to appreciate it, we must learn its ideal of fidelity. A bad man, as has been said, can be brave in some points, but no man can be brave in a baseness. There is always a sense of righteous claim and sacred call in the occasion. There is some nobleness in the undertaking, some loftiness of purpose, at least some pure instinct of nature. It is in answering a legitimate end of the hour, whether by doing or suffering, that any animal or moral nature is really valiant. The secret of it is, therefore, the presence of the Infinite overshadowing and upholding the life. It is a trust in the power of justice, as outreaching the present and hailing us from beyond. It may be a vague, inarticulate trust. It may be an unintelligent instinct, but it is a law and a force. The watch dog knows it when he barks at the robber's tread. The gunner feels it, who stands to his guns. The regiment obeys it, kneeling patiently to the mowing sword, like dry grass to the scythe. The boy recalled it when he stood at his post in the burning ship—a statue glowing in the folding flames. Yonder brave child chanted it like an angel, when he replied to his vile father, who would make him privy to a crime, each time that that inhuman monster unlaced his bleeding back, and let down his fainting frame from the ceiling,—“I can not tell a lie, father; father, I can not tell a lie.” And in all the weak misgivings

of our mortal frame, and in all the falterings and flinchings of our wretched spirits, and in the penury and paltriness of our life-schemes, in the meagerness and melancholy of our dischargings, in the baseness of our retreats, in the meanness of our prevarications, in our temporizings among men, and procrastinations of time, our inward quakings and our outward pretenses, our delays in the present and our doubts of the morrow, we are revealing to the universe of God, what, for the most part, we conceal from ourselves,—that there is a chasm between us and the reservoir of infinite resources,—that the nerve throbs are languishing and torpid with which we touch the everlasting throne,—that down here, as in a ravine, the atmosphere is chill and dusk, and the sky above overcast with clouds,—that sin has estranged us, and doubt has unmanned us, and that so, even trifling troubles can distress us, and passing perils can put us to flight, and our lives are rather thoughts of what we might do, and sighs of what we would do, than doings themselves, and our sufferings are violent infictions under which we cry and groan, rather than cheerful sacrifices which we render,—and our prayers are rather gasps of the dying than songs alive; and our hopes are more like night dreams from which we startle, than like night stars which we see. While, nevertheless, we are creatures of the living God who made nothing in vain, and in all time of need, and in

all onset of danger, he is not far from every one of us.

True spiritual bravery is a fellowship with the living God, restored in the nativity of the new birth, and cherished in the natural relations of soul life.

We may consider this influence from afar, in its principle, in its power, and in its triumph.

Valor of soul is the approving presence of God, the electric touch of the Creator on the marrow of the creature. We shudder in the absence, the silence of God, like children in the dark, unaccountable gloom overspreading us at the thought of him. Often we can not tell what ails us. It seems rather as if the thought of God were oppressing us with an awful nighness and contact. But it is that we would escape the spell of his sensible distance which seems to be his frown; as when an aggrieved friend turns from our door, or passes us as strangers in the streets.

At his name there is a depression of our spirits and an ebb of our powers. But it is the terror of his infinite remove—it is the pain of alienation. It is as when an east wind cloaks the sky with thick, brooding, toppling clouds, which seem to bend the heavens into contact with the earth, but really lock the blue firmament out of sight and hide it far away. At such a time one seems to see the firmament descending upon him, but the bleak vapors that pervade his breast, the

thick mists that cloy his brain, make him gasp and gurgle as if the clear sky had been dissolved into raw gray fathoms, as if he were drowning on the slimy floor of some sullen sea. Even so religious contemplation and the access of religious truth may bring us nigh to God. They may fill us with his dread and smother us beneath the piling clouds of his rejection—at once the steaming, spreading vapors of our unbelief, and the storm region of his judgment.

There are, it is true, sweet glimpses of God's love in the works of his hands. There are crystal depths of his glory carved and gleaming everywhere around us. And the face of nature, which would be appalling in its mien of dignity, becomes sweet in its smile; and the extent of creation, which would overwhelm us with its vastness, reassures us by its matchless concinnity, and consoles us with its dulcet harmony. That gracious entirety of God's works, which in any separate development and search would overwhelm us with a sense of our own insignificance, and prostrate us in the same dust with the flowers of a summer day and the insects of an hour, seems to wear a maidenly grace on its awful majesty, and to breathe a message from our Father in heaven, in the sigh of the wind and the moan of the surf, as well as in the green of the landscape and the glow of the light,—a soothing and refreshing assurance. But poetry does not avail us in practical deeds. The sentiments of

Charms of Nature no more release us from this our fearfulness, than to climb the mountain and survey the setting sun would emancipate us from the gathering shadows—than to gaze into the zenith with our dying eyes, would save us from sinking into the dust of our graves.

We sulk from the wooings of glory like ill-tempered children—we take wing from the call of Heaven like frightened birds. Pagan races dwell on the richest soils, and under the sunniest skies; but Pagan religions are embodiments of fear—Pagan orgies are the shrieks of dismay—Pagan festivals are the solemn pomps of despair. If, as we see even here, all the gloom of the grave and all the sternness of truth have so little express influence upon men to restrain them from crime, it will be difficult to tell what subtle forces of terror must have been working for ages in the savage breast, both by immediate suggestion and by traditionary accretion, to press from it such tortures of body, such exactions of life, such abject religious dismay. It may be a very easy thing to sneer at superstitions which do not touch us. But the spells of superstition are terrible. The minds which now wear the chains of superstition in Pagan or Papal countries, the minds which in the dark ages crouched to its lash, were, in their primal make, just such minds as ours. Among them were such talents and such genius as any age, or any land has produced.

It is revelation that has made our freedom of thought, our elasticity of mind. It is not our freedom of thought which has devised revelation. It was the striking off of our shackles which caused our minds to expand. It was not the expansion of our minds which shivered our shackles. The mystery of godliness—God manifested in the flesh—is the only real introduction into the presence of God, the only restorative of bravery. There is an Immanuel—a God with us. He hath made both one, who is our peace, therefore we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God.

The insignificance of this lower creation, of these terrestrial lives, hinders not the celestial fellowship. For it does not matter what part of the household our dwelling is, or what office of the household we fill; if we be children, the same roof covers all, the same bounty feeds all, the same care preserves all, the same love enfolds all, the same home belongs to all. It matters little that the children are schooled away to some dreary durance, and under some tutelage restraint. If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Before us appears the incarnate God. His love divine speaks through his human sympathy. If it were but an angel love, an angel bidding, it were only a poetic cadence in the universe of God. They only bow

before the throne. But this God-Man reveals to us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. When descending from the cross, which he had climbed to crucify our sins, and nail the handwriting of our offenses that he might blot out for ever; when rising from the grave into which he had but stepped to bury human guilt, and human woe, he the man of our manhood assures us,—I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God; when we catch his song of triumph climbing up the skies,—all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, and lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world,—then human hope fledges to fly away along with him, and poor human hearts take courage, looking into the everlasting doors that open over head, and the gates that lift their hinging heads, hearing now distinct and clear the voice of the Almighty God, the voice of pardon and the voice of love, the voice of promise and the voice of peace.

The same principle is the courage of Christian obedience, the fortitude of Christian endurance. Christian duty is as much what God does for us, as what we do for God. If he require holiness of his people, it is because he has called them to holiness. If he give us any thing to do, it is just what he means to have done. From without, piety looks like the rendering of tasks. From within, it becomes the return of thanks. From without, it seems to be a mechanical force. From

within, it reveals itself as a vital growth. From without, it looks like a burden. From within, it is a rest. From without, it is esteemed a compensation to God for the enjoyment of life. From within, it is God's compensation for the trials of life. From without, it is reckoned as the tribute, the toll which eternity challenges from time. From within, it is the bounty which eternity lavishes upon time. From without, it is the soul's obligation, the soul's necessity. From within, it is the soul's treasure and the soul's joy. From without, it is a compulsion. From within, it is a permission. From without, it is an affright. From within, it is a bravery. From without, it is a slavery to God. From within, it is God's affiance and indwelling glory.

The fear of difficulties is as overmastering as the fear of dangers. Work will try a man's courage more than pain. A soldier will give out on the march, who could stand fire on the field. A traveler flags in the miles who could run up the crags. And it is not after all, as we commonly charge it to be, a defiance and a disdain, which human rejection is apt to display. It is not the complacency or the contempt which we are apt to allege, which causes the practice of human indifference and the progress of human insensibility. It is not the audacity of the soul, which makes it turn away its head and speak very harshly, and appear to be very much occupied with other things within the



ranges of entreaty, and affect to be suddenly interrupted in the visits of celestial thought by obtrusive cares;—but it is a deadly cowardice, a craven tremor of the spirit, which thinks within itself, If I may but skulk past this presence unobserved,—if I may but loose myself from this appeal without a too manifest resistance, I shall breathe more freely,—as you turn from a door, which you long to enter, lest you be spurned, and watch without in a sickly suspense; or as one abandons an estate which he can not support, an office which he can not fill.

If we did but know it, God exacts of his people only what he exacts of the sod from which the flowers spring and the fruit trees grow, a prompt and patient posture, an open access to heaven, while his sunshine and his rain enrich the clay, and his mystic power bids the fibrous roots stretch, and the bulbous germs expand. So his almighty power, and his unwinking care achieve a glory in our enriching yields of service and of growth. When we discover that what God will have us to do, that God will help us to do, in very truth will do for us; that the most intimate culture of personal holiness is a page of his manuscript; that the bud that blooms in the sunbeams is tinted every day by the artist-touch of his infinity;—then we see that obstacle is as much the effort he prepares for himself, as the discipline he lays upon us. And so it will turn out that we shall be co-workers with God,

alike in the most adverse circumstances as in those most plausible and propitious. It were as well to doubt the victory of the springtide, which he sends upon the stern and struggling winter, or the progress of the rill, which he commissions to run down the mountain side, and through the sandy thirsts, to bear his messages to the sounding sea, or the prowess of his morning lusters, to irradiate the vault of night, or the strength of the tender grass, to cover with its gentle carpeting the cold and rugged crust of earth—as to doubt the success of a soul engaged to his keeping, a soul obedient to the power of his truth, a soul channeled to his gospel fullness, a soul quickened by his regenerating love.

There is a still further reach of soul courage. It is a triumph of destiny by a perpetual presence of God. The climax of bravery is in the crisis of peril. Whatever incidents of trial may intervene, whatever accidents of disaster may interrupt, are but miniatures of the whole destiny, as little waves crest and career over each other upon the brow of the huge, rolling breakers that stride in the sea. It is our journey of being which is always at stake in our night lodging of time. A man can do nothing too trivial, a man can suffer nothing too slight to vibrate to the shores of his duration. The pebble sends its circle over the breast of the broad lake. Every crisis in a human existence is a stage in the crisis of being.

Our eternity is pending, and we scarcely realize it—our being is in peril, and we see it dimly. In every chance and change of life, in every sorrow and in every joy, in every hope and fear, which would be naught to us if we could see the end from the beginning—which would be well with us, if we were sure that all would end well,—which would be but sand falling into the grave of our oblivion, if we were sure to be annihilated,—which would be but a cloud passing over our mountain brow, if we were sure that we should live for ever,—there remains now an unearthly import, because we know not what may be before us, because we float and toss here on the surface of the vast and the all of existence, shuddering in the shocks of the unknown, lost in the spaces of the unseen, and trembling with affright at every creak and jar, as the voyager upon the sea trembles in the tempest, and resolving the voyage of life into a shipwreck struggle and suspense, a sickly calculation of rescue.

Most mortals encounter the boundless future, by turning away their heads, and refusing to look into his face, into whose arms they fall.

Suicide leaps into eternity in convulsive affright, as the bird into the serpent's throat. But that is not bravery. And many take a suicidal leap of soul, and would rather dash their spirits headlong down or topple backwards into the engulfing void, than look with patience on the throne of God. But it is the

Alone of that transition which is tremendous. It is the dark which fills us with dismay. What shall we be?—how shall we be?—where shall we be?—when shall we be?

Suppose that certain recent fancies should prove true;—shall I be liable to every earthly call, and in some intermediate state struggle through the shifting void to make one who knew me well, know me again? Shall I be hovering like an insect round about these paltry scenes, and wrestling and toiling with pain to tip the table which a human hand can lift?

Suppose my conscience to be truer than my hope, shall I be floundering in everlasting sin, and sinking in the tides of retribution? God's truth is true—but God's truth is a doubt, a mystery for me. Where shall I find God? Where shall I see Christ? How shall I reach heaven? At this point, the faith from beyond becomes a courage that domesticates us in the universe, as men have found home in strange lands. Faith inaugurates such a divine presence on the heart in its life here, as to inspire courage, not to supersede it. It is an assurance, not an exhibition. It is still the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

God's form is nowhere seen; but God's voice is heard. It calls the soul by name. It is not a mere tone of kind omnipotence—the vagueness of an omnipotent care; it is the magnetic sympathy, the hu-

man accent, of him who tasted death for every man.

The scenery of time shall still be awful, the shadows of time shall still sweep the little landscape of the life within their solemn folds, as nightfall closes in upon the cottage at the forest edge. But as you stand in tranquil musing amid the rocky gorges, or upon the mountain cliff, and the awe of nature is no longer terrible and haunted, but sublime and beatific,—so can the soul stand undismayed amid the wilds of life, and cross its gorges unaffrighted, and gaze with meekness of high thought into its ravines, and fall asleep in the drear dark of its midnight—knowing that his Almighty hand has piled each jutting stone, and spread the shadowy carpet—at home in any change of life, at peace in every tempest.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ASSURANCE OF HEREAFTER.

IDENTITY OF LIFE.—PEEP INTO ANOTHER WORLD.—A FAMILIAR TOKEN.—FINDING A FRIEND IN A STRANGE LAND.—POWERLESSNESS OF PROSPECT IN ITS INDISTINCTNESS.—ASTRONOMIC CALCULUS.—HEAVENLY CONSCIOUSNESS.—NO SELF TRUST.—LAW OF FAITH IN TELESCOPE.—MYSTERY FORESTS.—ASSURANCES IN SOUL LIFE HAVE DIVINE SIGNATURE.—LETTERS NOT ESSAYS.—ASSURANCE VARIABLE.—RAINBOW.—THE WATERFALL.—THE LEAF.—THE MOUNTAIN SLOPE BY NIGHT.

THE prospect of hereafter defines itself in life here, faintly, but determinately, as a landscape mirrors itself in a lake. However we discriminate the relations between works and faith, it will be universally conceded, that the spiritual life which we anticipate in its consummations, must be the renewed life which is now conscious of its own vitality. The difference can only be one of progress, and not one of kind.

This identity of Christed life within, and glory life to come, becomes the ground of absolute assurance.

It might be accounted a rare treat to get a peep within the world invisible. The elevation of thought might be incalculable, and the conviction abiding. But our apprehensions of the scenery would be wild and vague. The personages would be strangers. A

strictly supernatural realm must be terrible to us. A spirit makes us shudder by its visit here. Our visit to a world of spirits would be still more overwhelming. A loneliness unutterable would seize a man in such a state. He would experience the shock, the lifelessness of trance, the magnetic pain of an abnormal plight.

Now to such an one, the first familiar object, never so slight, would endear itself. Let an exile on a savage coast espy a familiar flower, and he weeps for joy. Any thing that he can claim as a link with his home, recalls and restores him.

Suppose it to be possible, in looking through the sky, to discover there a human form—a living man. He might be a man you never saw before; might be a sort of man you would not admire on the earth, but the sight of him, as moving to and fro among the stars, would be an element making the firmament itself alive for you. Suppose further, that the recognition should be more complete,—that not only a human form were visible, but that you found in him your acquaintance and your friend. The firmament would reveal itself a house. Imagine your arrival in a strange land where a friend resides. You know nothing of the localities, nothing of the laws, nothing of the pleasures or the perils. You are met on the wharf, and taken by the hand. You are, in the shadows of evening, bewildered by strange sounds and

unintelligible language—all things wild and desolate; but you are in your friend's care. You said, when you set out on the journey, I know not what is before me, or how to make my way, but I shall meet there one whom I shall recognize. He will recognize me. The assurance, the repose, is in the recognition. But still further. Imagine this recognition is of one who went there for your sake. He undertook your cause. He is your elder brother. You have come there poor and feeble. You were voyaging in quest of him. But your bark has been wrecked. You have lost every thing, even to your wardrobe. You are hurled speechless on a foreign coast. What matters it? In that single thought of recognition, in the first mutual glance, your whole care is composed, your whole need is met.

The prospect of the life to come is powerless to most men, because it is indistinct. But it is indistinct because it is not embodied in the phases of the present life. How one who dwells here can be sure of his dwelling there, is a problem as incomprehensible, on the face of it, as the question how we can determine the motion of the stars and their proper magnitudes. There seems no more soul-reach possible in the former, than hand-reach, or machine-reach, in the latter. And there are perhaps as few persons who understand the laws of reflection and refraction in the one, as in the other. Fewer still are there who know how to



adjust crystal lenses of this time life, to the rays of that eternity.

Assurance of the life beyond is, nevertheless, a legitimate, perhaps an essential, development of true spirituality, in its culmination here. Let us not be misapprehended. A true faith may stand in doubt of itself. Its sensibility may be perplexed, may be exhausted, may be benumbed. But a true faith is just as sure of its futurity as it is of its present exercise. Assurance is best defined, as a heavenly consciousness, which is a consciousness that proves itself to come from heaven, and so takes hold of heaven. It becomes an attribute of life, just in proportion as that life manifests itself to be of heaven. If any one objects to this view, as if it countenanced self-trust, and inculcated self-righteousness, he mistakes its drift. Heavenly consciousness is consciousness of life secured in Christ, derived from Christ, constantly and utterly derived, just as sight of the sun is consciousness of sunlight and of sunbeam. Yet the mere hope that there is power and love in Christ to give eternal life, which, accepting that life, becomes the condition of it, is no more its assurance, than the hope which makes one open his eyes, or unbar his window, is the sight he sees. Life eternal, as a present entity, in its pulses and its growth, has the power to articulate itself in its own harmony, and by its own laws. Its Here is the undoubted image of its Hereafter. When the image

disappears, the substance fades. When the image is distinct, the substance is undoubted. And thus faith transcends reason, approving itself simply an ulterior reason, a magnifying power. Ask yourself why you believe the testimony of the telescopes when they look so far. Suppose them to be illusive instruments, and trust rather the naked eye, which sees the stars as little glistening holes. Look about you, and believe only what you see. Suppose there to be no other world. Suppose that lenses delude you. But I can suppose no such thing, you say. Why not? Because I see through those lenses. There is a law of ocular trust in them which governs my vision. There is no less a law of faith. Faith, if the eye brighten with practice, with calm glistening of gaze,—faith can be as sure, looking through Christ's face, of yonder vast eternity, as such a glass of yonder distant orb. To look in the Spirit is to know what you see, and is to see eternal glory. To see it is to know that it must be there. Vast mystery may overspread the vision, vast void may open up before it, like untraveled, unmapped sky;—but we can see the central throne. Mystery is but the fitting drapery of glory that covers it, as woods drape the landscape.

Who doubts the solid earth floor, who distrusts the sod, because thick underbrush conceals it, and the forest glooms in solemn guard, and rustles in uninterpreted cadences? We know the ground that

stretches there to be the same as that we feel beneath our feet.

And so, Christ's divine humanity and finished work, once touched in life, is standing ground, abiding home for us;—we doubt it not, though it stretch out of sight beneath the forest of his unknown ways, and within the horizon of a future yet unseen. If I know in whom I have believed, I need know nothing more.

Spiritual life is thus called the power of the world to come. The Here feels the breezes of Hereafter, as the land the breezes from the ocean. And it needs them. It is not enough to know that one loves you, whom you love; you must have him say so. If your friend be far away, and years intervene, you will neither distrust nor despise his faithfulness. What then? You hope to hear him say so. The letters must come whispering,—I love you; yours always. The syllables seem always fresh. God's words of promise are to most men essays, paragraphs, without date or signature.

But God signs his letters to his absent children. Christ dates them with a Now, fresh from his pen of glory; and he signs them,—Yours truly,—Ever yours,—Yours till I come. He says it over and over again, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. One can know his signature; one can know his seal.

Assurance is not always bright in glow; but it is always possible in principle. It may come to us amid tempestuous discouragements, in a transient flash, a sudden flush of spiritual luster. Then it fades awhile; but we know that it had been there. You have watched a rainbow in the hurtling shower. It stood a moment, fair, serene. Its resplendence set out broadly on the black wall of the thunder gust. It hung just long enough, that drenched wayfaring men, and anxious husbandmen and shipwrecked mariners might see it, and know of a truth that it was there. Then it faded, mist-like, and disappeared in a deepening shadow and a revengeful marshaling of clouds. But it had been there. You knew, they knew, that the storm must flee the field—that even then and there the angry clouds were maneuvering in their retreat; and birds sang out in the blackness, and men walked forth as if the sunshine had already come.

And so, amid the sweeping anger of soul darkness, and the pelting power of sin fears, if one can see the rainbow round about the throne, he goes forth in peace and safety in God's name.

You have listened, in midsummer, to the voice of a waterfall. It grew less and less;—it became a murmur,—a plaint of nature, a sigh of hope; but it never died utterly away. In scorching days and dusty weeks, when the trees were dry and languid, and the tender grass wilted sadly, still the tone made its vow,

still the stream appealed to him who set it flowing. But presently the freshet of the springtide swelled it to a torrent. It could flood again, for the fountain never dried. And so the life-reach of heaven, though it sometimes is a slender thread, ceases not to flow. You have seen a little leaflet trembling on a tree. The leaf shivered, but the tree was firm. The leaf was tiny, but the trunk was stout. The leaf was tender, but the root was fresh;—unless the tree suffers from the heat the leaf will not wither. Faith life is but a tender, tiny life, yet the glory tree casts no leafage.

And on this principle, and by this law, the future is substantiated. You have been riding down a mountain in the mists and shades of evening. You went uncertainly, not knowing what lay before you, but that a single shadowy shape held the eye. It was perhaps the turret of a church. You knew that tower, though you could not see the whole of it. You knew that near it spread a wide highway, smooth, safe, and guarded, where were homes of men and many lovely gardens. You knew that there was a familiar spot where you had loved to linger. You knew that there were those who watched for you. You knew that you would meet as you had met, and worship in that temple. And best and eagerest of all, you knew that there was a place waiting there for you, that there was a room of love, that eyes glistened for

your return, and little children prattled of it, and good cheer was on the board, and firm roof above. Naught to you the distance and the darkness. Naught to you an ignorance of this or that. The tower was enough to know. So the human form of Christ looms out from mists—the void of that Beyond to which we travel. Around it heaven makes home. And one single spectacle of that Hereafter, that temple tower of eternity, reassures this sloping, shadowed way, that we are in the right, unfailing path.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE ANALOGY OF SIGHT.

QUESTION OF QUESTIONS.—SIGHT OF GOD.—IDEAL VIEW.—RATIONAL RELIGION.—NOTHING MORE OF GOD HEREFTER THAN HERE.—CUP IN OCEAN.—NIAGARA.—UNSUBSTANTIAL SPIRITUALISM.—MATERIALISM ESSENTIAL TO PERSONALITY.—INEFFECTUAL THOUGHT.—RESULTS OF THESE SCHEMES.—VOID AND VACANCY.—FUTURE CONFUSION OF SPIRIT LIFE.—REVELATION CLEAR TO THE CONTRARY.—REDEMPTION OF MATTER.—DESTINY OF GLOBE ANALOGOUS TO HISTORY.—DELUGE THE PLEDGE OF CONFLAGRATION.—RESTORATION AS CERTAIN.—CONTRASTIVE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE.—ULTIMATE EPIPHANY.—RESUMPTION OF PARADISE.—BEARING OF THE WHOLE FIRMAMENT.—THE FINAL HOME.

THERE remains one question of all questions. What ultimate approach to God is possible for creatures? What future vision may there be for us?

The man who ponders these things is amazed at his own spiritual ignorance and impotence of thought. There is the philosophical or ideal view. It is content with an ideal God, whose only intercourse with creatures is supposed to be their exercise of abstract reason. The mind can apprehend the idea of the infinite, and this impersonal speculative notion of the mind, this thought of God, is all the God philosophy discovers or adores. This baseless notion, like a fog bank, fashions of its substance the whole fabric of your

metaphysical religion. The temple of its worship is a cloud shape, rearing its mist spire and its vapor buttresses into gilded pinnacles of poesy.

To greaten their conceit of God, these thinkers exalt him out of reach and perfect him from all reality. His being they make so immense, as to be void of substance. He is to them a mind without a heart, a thought without a will, a vision, an abstraction without a personality. It would astonish most men to detect the vacancy of their own thoughts when they are striving at once to describe their Maker as incomprehensible, and at the same time to comprehend him. This ideal theory denies incarnation. It ignores resurrection. It looks askance upon the prospect of a material and local destiny. It is skeptical about any such creatures as hovering, singing, alighting angels. They are esteemed to be pleasant fantasies of the soul itself. Thought is the only spiritual substance. Thought inflates itself. And inflated thought is always unreal. Spirituality, in that case, is only unreality. In that case, celestial contemplations are only gaseous exhalations from a damp, dreary earth, from a fretting mortality, fermenting as it crumbles. A man who accredits no positive epiphany, no condescension and approach of the Almighty, can have no substantial prospect in the future.

If my thought of God, my dabbling notion of his omnipotence, and his omniscience, of his unchange-



ableness and his eternity, be all the presence I can have of him,—I can have it here and now just as well as then and there. If there be no form of God, there certainly can be no sight of God. When I enumerate his attributes, I pile up words that express my present ignorance.

But will a transfer to another world explain to me what omnipresence is? Not unless I could be omnipresent with him, and so perceive it. Will eternity disclose to me his omniscience? Not until I shall have traversed its whole range, and entered into its whole comprehension, and so become myself omniscient. And as to the bald thought of it, I can have it here. Upon this basis I have as much of heaven, and as much of God, already, as my soul can have.

You may dip a cup into the ocean; but it will hold no more than if you dip it in a rill. If intellect alone can come to God, my soul grasps as much thought of Godhead upon yonder mountain summit as it could span upon the topmost peak of Paradise. My heart, surcharged with the anthem of Niagara, could contain no more praise of him if angel harps vibrated in the rainbow there. And if you tell me that the soul itself shall be expanded and invigorated, that every capacity shall be purified, and every power renewed, still it will be a finite soul, at infinite remove, in all its thoughts and all its aspirations, from apprehension of the Infinite. On the one hand, there is

no security for a progression so indefinite as is thus alleged, a development so everlasting.

The more devoutly one has cherished day-dreams of a Godhead presence on the earth, the more he must be distressed with darkness, and distracted with the distance. The most pious and devout, in all their meditations, get but lower in the dust, exclaiming, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I can not attain unto it.

And on the other hand, even if there were warranted to us such an expectation of advancing in knowledge of God, still we should never see him face to face, and never know as we are known; but in the highest range of celestial exaltation, and in the farthest stretch of an eternity to come, must still sigh, O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I can not perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I can not behold him; he hideth himself; on the right hand, but I can not see him.

There is another theory which does not reach the truth, even where the divine incarnation and the human resurrection are acknowledged.

The future may still seem vague and unsubstantial. Few minds thoroughly appreciate the reason or the nature of an incarnation. It is esteemed a sort of artificial and temporary assumption, as if Christ's hu-

manity had been prepared just to be a vehicle of suffering. The fact is overlooked that he has resumed the human form to wear it evermore. And then, the embodied future is reduced to a mere spectacle of shadows. It may not be contravened as a Scripture teaching. But it scarcely seems a fact within our apprehension. Our very notion of a spirit is for the most part a confusion of the understanding. It is an impracticable notion, as if a spirit were a thought or a congeries of thoughts. The fact is, that when we try to discriminate between matter and spirit, we delude ourselves with word-play.

Materialism is essential to personality. Materialism is essential to spiritual life. The fallacy of all our talk lies in overlooking the fact that there may be a style of matter, a physical subsistence, independent of those arbitrary properties which we assign it, and which characterize all matter that we know. Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. But when you think of a soul, you think of a form.

A ransomed spirit is to you a human shape, not a thinking faculty, nor an assemblage of ideas. Until God takes form, there is no God accessible for man. Of old, the highest access to him was in the splendor of the Shekinah. Afterwards Christ came, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, who is the brightness of his glory and the express image

of his person. There is an untold volume in that utterance from his lips, No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him.

The aforesaid visionary theories are not spiritual. The notion of most men is that a man's soul is something apart from himself, a kind of jewel which he carries in his bosom, while the rest of him is waste and worthless wrapping paper.

And violent spasmodic efforts are made to grasp a spiritual life, which is after all a life fantastic. No wonder that often the weakest heads and the most gloomy hearts seem to have achieved the most of it.

And while upon these theories all creation of material substance was a creation in vain, and stands in the way of God's glory like a wall, imprisoning the human spirit like a sepulchre, so that the heart strings are heavy fetters, and the ties of this life bind a chain on the soul, and the only purport of physical existence has been to discipline mankind, and to try them, at every disadvantage, and at every hazard, keeping them apart from God their Maker,—a discipline, a development of spirit better made in some other sphere;—and while, upon the same terms, it appears that the best use we can make of this earth is to get altogether out of it;—it will result as clearly that the life to come bears no analogy to this life, and can not be anticipated; that the resurrection of the dead is but an

irrelevant and phantasm show ; and that when we shall find ourselves transferred to another sphere, we shall find ourselves transmuted into other beings ; that not only is this solid earth to be demolished out of space, as if God had made a blunder, but to us at least, losing all outward vision, and all physical sensibility, the vast concave of glory overhead is to be peeled away, and the myriad starry systems black powdered into void ; and blank space, untenanted, is to lull, like a Dead Sea, round about the throne on high. And the future, the vast everlasting future, is to recede into the distance and the silence of thought—and the music which God's word beats upon our ears almost audibly,—as one can drum upon a board or rock a various and ecstatic air, which he had heard performed by a whole band of instruments,—is a mere imaginary melody, a thought of harmony, a reflection upon praise ; and the glory which even now wells through chinks and crevices, and sheds broad sheer on our hearts, is to be a mere abstract glory—intellectual and not visual, illusive and impalpable. So that while our past life must be given up as good for naught, and our past home dispersed in its holiest lusters and most glowing loves, as meteoric vapor, our home to come must be, to all intents and purposes, a strange land ; and our being must be more a mystery than ever, in the loss of our identity ; and our life to come, the creation of another class of creatures. In this view, salvation itse'f

becomes practical annihilation; there was no need to be born again upon the earth, since we are to be made again in the sky. The consummation day of glory to which we had looked forward, as the attaining point, the culmination of our spiritual path, the manhood and the majesty of our divine adoption, becomes but the imbecility of infancy; a blind and puling entrance on another destiny, which we never could have comprehended, a destiny which our very nature and our earth life made us incapable to comprehend; a destiny in which we are to become mere mental processes, and our God a creature of our thought.

Suppose all this to be so, and we can imagine the strange misgiving memories which would haunt the spirit, even in its highest elevation; the obtrudings of its former being; the yearning of its sympathies long past. It could not repress regret for earth, even in heaven. It could not help wondering, at least, why this globe, where God had shown so much, and done so much, had been suddenly steeped in such oblivion. It would think of streams and mountains. It would remember trees and flowers. It would rehearse sights and sounds of earth. It would recollect home and loves. And while we can see how such recollection is being purged from all that had been gross, and cheered from all that had been dismal, and humbled from all that had been vain; while we

can anticipate the celestial scenery, and the celestial substance in its purity, and perfectness, and power, we can not presuppose, and we can not understand, a life to come, which shall have no analogy to this life, no reproduction of it,—since that would not be another life, but the life of another creature.

The word divine has not left this prospect in the dark. It may surprise some of us to learn, that there is not one syllable asserting ethereal or immaterial existence in all the Scripture. In casting off this flesh, we are assured that there is no unclothing, but a being clothed upon. We have for the most part mistaken dreamings of philosophy for the utterance of God. The whole tenor of his teaching is to this effect, that the Almighty condescends to earth, not that he despises it; that he redeems it, not that he discards it; that he restores it, not that he destroys it. There is no unsubstantial realm about us. As far as we know, all life within the universe takes form. The Creator has form to his creatures. The essence of the mystery is, that he took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the fashion of a man.

There is to be no annihilation of material substance, no repudiation of almighty handiwork. The secret peers forth already to the delving spade and knocking hammer of the sciences, that the revolution which God's word predicts, lies embryonic now in Nature's heart. The tracery of former ebullitions, the seams

and sutures where elemental distractions sought fresh combinations, the notches and the punctures, the knots and ligatures of interlacing ribs,—disclose to us the fact that not in a suicidal ruin, but in an organic vitality, the same secret forces lurk. The very spontaneity of the change serves its security. The fire which is to smelt this planet smolders gently, making its hearth bed in its depths, or keeps its lightning watch around it, just as of old the water that should overflow it, held the new-born earth in its lap, a nursling to be robbed—the earth standing in the water and out of the water. And just as the globe emerged, sparkling in firmer strength, dew clad from that clasp, arching its brows with the rainbow promise of that very flood, lifting into mountains, bending into valleys, threading its breast with brooks, and spangling its sides with lakes, slaking its thirst at mystic cisterns;—just as it sprang forth, purified, vigorous, elastic in its liteness, from the shock and shiver of that plunging bath,—we are warranted in the analogy that the patient attempering fire lurks within, a guardian, not a foe, and that it shall put forth its energy, and arouse its fury, to purify, not to destroy. We may not be prepared to enter into nice descriptions of the mineralogical and crystallizing processes which shall be thus developed. We can not analyze the pure gold, like unto clear glass, which shall be wrought in the roaring furnace of that day, nor trace the transmuting virtue



of such appalling blaze, to render dull clods into living gems, and sand grains into diamond flashes, and unsightly pebbles into shapely jewels, and crumbling mountains into glistening turrets, nor tell how air that vanishes in that concussion shall give place to stainless ether, knowing never more a vapor, never more a speck, never more a jar,—nor how, in this way, the distant stars may come nigh us, and commune with us, nor what the telegraphic contact and the ecstatic buoyancy of life in such a scene must be.

But we can believe that the same hand which gathered together the waters in one place, will quench that smokeless flame, just at the pitch of perfect polish, just at the point of flashing radiance; and we can discern that there shall come forth from the sweep and the intensity of such a conflagration, a new heavens and a new earth, flocked by no speck of sin, agitated by no throe of evil; where, by the very sensitiveness of an unsullied purity, as well as by the decree of God, no unheavenly spectacle can linger; where—for it is a word divine that schemes it, not a human fancy—there shall enter nothing that defileth, or that maketh a lie; where, as on a suitable theater, the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him; where they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat—a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The Scriptures tell us that the second man and his race return to such a home. They show us the new Jerusalem, that is, the company of the redeemed, descending like a holy city. They lift an anthem, as if it were the shout of saints returned, when they plant their feet upon this palacê of their God—or else, as if it were the wonder-cry of angels in the distance.

It is strange that they who dispute this revelation, do not discern how the very descriptions which disprove sensuous Paradise, demand Paradise on earth.

If it be said, They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, is it not said of a spot where once man's sins wrought man's necessity? Does not the blessing stretch where the curse had spread? If it be said, The inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick, does it not describe a country where sickness groaned beneath the touch of death? If it be said that there shall be no more curse, could that be said of the heaven where no curse was ever known? If it be said, And I saw no temple therein, is it not because once the temple was the only dwelling place of God?

When our Saviour said, I go to prepare a place for you, he said again, And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again. The tempest of such an era may whirl in blasts of blaze, and sheet in showers of forking flame. But even now, when the raving storm wind hushes suddenly, and retires, as if

abashed that it was so impetuous, when the torrents stint and still, as if the sky had bethought itself of fruit trees and gardens, and the drenched and drooping flowers,—at such a time the earth-face is more beautiful, and tilth is greener, and the plants are tearful in their joy, and man's prostrate, languid nerves kindle to a fresh exuberance. Then how serene and how sublime will be that clearing up, when the last tongue of flame shall have swept the sky, and melted in the superior luster of the spreading sheen, as stars die out before the blushing dawn; when the last hiss of fury shall have searched its crevice; when the last ember of destruction shall have glowed into its effulgence of restitution; when the last crackle of the consuming shall have dissolved the last atom of the corruptible, and in sweetness of purity, in freshness of fragrance, this terrestrial becomes the celestial, and this vanishing becomes the substantial; and the earth, awhile outcast from God, flushes into God's abode, and in the noontide of that nightless day, and in the calm of that celestial work, the home sense of that recovered world, the second man and his race take their place.

Then occurs the positive epiphany. The methods of divine manifestation may be still essentially mysterious. But they will not be unsubstantial. The Son of Man will not appear as before, a humiliated humanity, or even a limited humanity. In order to our vision

of him, our faculties must be glorified. We are to be like him, if we see him as he is. The form transformed in those who are caught up alive, is as essential, as the new creation to which they are exalted.

This transformation will be simultaneous, parallel, adapted. There will be nothing fleshly or perverse. There will still be much material. From the supernal throne a positive effluence of divine glory shall go forth to bless and beautify other spheres, as now the stars look like the sun.

The Second Man shall rule the race by kindred forces, and speak by kindred heralds, and flood his joy upon human angelhoods for ever. Such an expectation raises no difficulty which is not raised by the theory of an ethereal heaven. Such an expectation meets no difficulty which is not answered in the garden of Eden.

They who dispute such a destiny for the earth, must dispute the earth's primeval history, and reduce it to an allegory. If there have been a fellowship at first between celestial creatures and the human pair, if the Lord God talked with them, if the Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day; if, that is to say, human nature had another attitude, and human life a loftier condition, from which we have fallen, so that we can not even picture it, what more legitimate interpretation can there be of redeeming purpose, what likelier aspect of a full consummation, than an earth

restored to a ransomed race, a Paradise regained for creatures emancipated from the curse?

So far as human sight can see, or human science calculate, the vast canopy above us fits this globe, and the ulterior powers of creation all adjust themselves, and the ultimate ranges of celestial space bask in the same light which tints these clouds and paints these fields, and shapes the whole arrangement and array of physical existence upon the tiny retina of human sight; concentrating unmeasured and untrodden leagues of distance, and innumerable starry worlds, upon a child's glancing eye. So that Nature, even majestic stellar Nature, expects her king in human form, and prepares for him, by whom all things consist, that he may gather together in one; and from the brooding, yearning tenderness of the horizon, and from the zenith's unfaltering gaze, and from the lambent flushes of the evening sky, and from the pensive stillness of the midnight stationing itself, and sentinelizing itself with eager stars, and from the eager, climbing morning, Creation gathers to behold the scene, Creation hastens to take up the shout, of a globe transfigured, and a race transformed, a Godhead palace, and a manhood home.

When thus Immanuel stoops to dwell with us, and we come back to dwell with God, life will exult in its rescues and returns. It will appear a blessed thing that this world was ever made, not a thing forlorn.

It is to such a destiny that human beings are invited freely. It is to the substance, of which all earthly good is but a hint. It is to the glory, of which all beauty here is but a shadow. It is to a joy, of which all sordid joy is but a mockery, all human joy is but a dream. It is to a rest, of which all rest below is but a glimmer. It is to music, of which all melody upon these ears, all melody within these hearts, is but a fluttering cadence, a mournful stanza, dying on the wind,—a faltering echo in the barren rocks. It is to a home, of which all earthly homes are only canvas daubs, and tantalizing touches. It is to a day, for which all other days were made. It is to a sabbath, of which the balmiest sabbath is an emblem, a fragrance spent upon the air. It is to a city, to which the grandeur of all earthly cities is the glow of cinders in an ashy heap. It is to a liberty, a franchise, before which all citizenship on earth is bondage and a dungeon doom. It is to a worship, of which all other worship is but as the chattering of parrots, chattering man's speech. It is to a life, for which all other life is but a bubble breath, a fleeting sigh. It is to God's own house. The dun, dusk ore which we called terrestrial life and time,—was one vast mine, minted and refined at last, in transparent gold of glory.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### FINAL FELLOWSHIP.

SPIRITUAL CONTACT NOW.—VITAL ORGANS.—ELECTRIC PHENOMENA EMBODIED.  
—SPIRIT FORMS.—NOTION OF DISTANT HEAVEN REPUDIATED.—RELATIVE  
DISTANCE OF STARS NOT OF GOD'S THRONE.—BODY WITHIN BODY.—ROOM  
EXPANDING.—RUSTLING OF THE VAIL.—SPIRITUALISM OF OLD TESTAMENT  
CHURCH.—WHITE SHIPS TO THOSE INLAND.—PRESENT RELATIONS RENOVAT-  
ED BY FAITH REACH.—TO BE PERFECTED HEREAFTER.—PROPERTY CEASING.  
—POSSESSION UNFAILING.—GOD'S CHILD NOT TO BE HOMELESS.—EMPLOY-  
MENT HEREAFTER.—COMPETITION NOT THE LIFE OF WORK.—THE LABORERS.  
—THE SCENE OF RESCUE.—CHILD'S CLAIM OF HOME VERIFIED.—SEX TO  
CEASE.—TWO ERRORS HERE.—BUT PURE LOVE PERMANENT.—DISTANCE  
CEASING.—BUT NOT MOTION.—CONTRASTS OF FELLOWSHIP.—THE MOUNTAIN.  
—NOW HIDING AND NOW STANDING OUT.—THE ASSEMBLAGE AT THE  
HOMESTEAD.

THERE is a spiritual contact of this material globe.  
The severance between the world of spirits and  
the world of matter is not a separation by distances,  
but a sundering by conditions. The vital organs of  
the human body are all set apart from one another by  
their membranes. The brain is disintegrated from the  
heart, and the blood from the breath. And so the  
spiritual world is not rendered remote, by the thor-  
oughness of its distinction from this physical sub-  
stance. We are only shut out of it by a cellular tissue.

Spirit is in the world as electricity is in bodies. It  
requires certain conditions for its display, a certain

medium for its activity, and in the lack of that medium it lies dormant, and is to us as if it were not. If yonder cloud region should be always in the proper condition to reveal its electric nature, instead of a flash of lightning, or a lightning streak, or an occasional fit of terrific display, or a rare gleam of auroral incandescence, the sky would fill itself with electric shapes, moving to and fro, flickering and dancing, but always bodied forth, as separate and substantial facts, and we should find names for them just as readily as for the stars. For all that we know, the stars may be such permanent points and pivots of electric life.

In the same way, if the world of spiritual life which now gleams on us, or glares on us, were to stand out by a revelation of spirit forms, we should find that it is not somewhere beyond the zenith, nor anywhere beneath the earth, but here in the sky over us, in the air about us, in the earth itself, in the hills, and trees, and streams.

Of course, then, there must be traits of disclosure, and epochs of spiritual revelation.

On this whole subject there are two errors to be corrected.

The one ignores the contact of the spiritual and material.

The other perverts it.

The notion that there is another world, somewhere away from this globe, and that such a remote region is



the heaven of God's throne and of celestial happiness, must be a delusion. Men do not commonly reflect on what they mean by this, or on its consequences. There are many other worlds far away, and far apart. You may travel to Mercury, and then to Saturn, and then to Herschel—and then the question would be, How far now to heaven? What is heaven? and where? Another planet still? A constellation? Visible? or invisible? Upon the supposition of its being a distant star, would not divine revelation be best studied with a telescope? Religion then should learn astronomy. But the inhabitants of Saturn, can they be nearer to our God than we? The result of this notion is a loose idea of God's relative distance. A dreary, desolate faith is that which refers glory to sheer dimness of space. For a man can not resist the conviction that his proper eye, made, as it is, to take in such myriads of worlds, really outlines the universe. If heaven be out of reach of all these, is it then hidden in a corner? Thus men lose faith in heaven as about them, and in God as at all near them.

The notion of a remote Paradise arises from mistaking the idiom of the word world, as if it meant a globe, when it intends an age, a dispensation. Heaven is recognized in the word divine, as within sight and hearing of this earth.

But it is boding and brooding now, to be bodied forth at last. We do not mean to make out a heaven-

state without place. There is place within place, as body within body. Our idea of place is a surface idea, like a child's notion of wall or fence—like an ignorant conception of sky, as a solid blue frame, with stars inlaid.

But search now yonder sapphire. Let the zenith open before you—or peer into the fullness of a drop, an atom, until it expands to an inhabited orb. So we think that we are dwelling in a contracted room, the atmosphere of which incloses us, and restricts our contact by its medium. But that room, in celestial measure, may spread for myriads of miles. It is crowded with intelligence and life. There are moments when the curtains here, such as we conceive the enveloping laws of our flesh to be, rustle and flutter, as if some one were putting them aside, as if they would drop down. But the Almighty hand has looped them carefully. It is but a breeze that stirs their folds, in dreams, in reveries, and on the cliff brows and the outer capes of Nature. The total failure of that style of sensualism, which has baptized itself a spiritualism, as often you have heard the names of heroes or of statesmen claimed by some felon in the criminal box, can cast no doubt upon the true law of spirit harmony between the realms of Here and those Beyond. If the modern church had been as faithful and as clear in the utterance of this law as the olden church, there would have been no such pouncing

on a forgotten fact of revelation, by sinister skeptics and sordid voluptuaries—as harpies pounced upon neglected tables.

In the credence of the Old Testament, there was at once distinct, the deadly peril of any rash intrusion, any cunning creep into the world of spirits, and the dear charm of angel ministration. How much rather now, when the door has been open, and angel visits have been recorded and angel choirs heard in the open air. He who does not believe these things does not believe any inspired things, and should say so frankly.

But he who believes these things, has a faith in glory and an access, otherwise impossible. Spirit conveyances are God's white ships to us who dwell inland, our home being embosomed in the hills. They bring us messages and means from heaven, and we know of their flitting whiteness on their scarless track, but we may not see them until we reach the sea-side.

When the life that now is is pervaded by the reach of that which is to come, its present ties are woven of celestial fabric. These are our brothers and our sisters, who meet us in the fellowship of spiritual life; and the relations of intimacy, or of consanguinity, or of circumstance, are just the divine arrangements of rooms for meeting and of seats for converse.

And there is yet to be revealed a perfect fellowship

of spirits. There are two elements of prospect in the life to come, which we incessantly put out of balance,—its difference from this life, and its analogical relation to it. The difference between a landscape and a landscape painting is none the less, where the likeness is absolute. So a human face and its image in the glass are counterparts, though of different substance.

To argue the annihilation of any relation here is to regard its institution as a blunder.

To anticipate its repetition, is to build a clumsy copy of this globe, and gild it over and call it heaven. The life to come is to some conceptions a palace prison; to others it is a picture in the blaze.

The ancients had some true notions of the future.

But just at the point of analogy their fancy failed. The thin shades had a tantalizing familiarity in their looks. And they could speak to one another. But there was something terrible and sad in the frustration of all fellowship, the unnatural plight, almost unreal. When the arms stretched out to clasp the loved, they clutched empty air. The same notion of phantoms and ghosts marks the ignorant in later times.

It is only by a clear discrimination of the analogy in the next life that you can apprehend its reality. Take any fact of relation here and reduce it to its parallel, its counterpart, there:—Property ceases.

But possession fails not. Man was not put here and educated to possess, gifted and endowed to give, that

he should be turned out of house and home at last. The child of God who had a cottage on this narrow and contracted globe, is not to go a tattered vagrant in the spaces. He who received day by day his daily bread joyously, is not to be demeaned into a starveling beggar, groping amid precarious chances and crunching crusts of charity. We must begin to think positively of another life, and not for ever negatively.

At once the question stirs—How is all this to be? What is the next method of possession? That tenure settled,—and the future intercourses of spirits, in their spiritual forms, begins to unfold itself. Are there to be any transactions there? And what life business will we follow?—we who follow it upon our feet all day, and in our dreams by night, as ships that pant their steam among the billows, presently scud softly by their mystic sails? There will be no idleness in that bracing atmosphere of glory; there will be work to do and work to share. The business transactions there will scheme to help and not to hinder, the pathways of immortal strength.

It is an ingrained falsehood of the heart, maximed in life, that competition is the life of work. There opens a prospect, and there awaits a possession, which knows no invidious aim, no emulous conceit. Notice a group of eager laborers busy at a piece of work for the same employer. Each has his province and his

part, but all are to have the same day's wages for the same day's work. One is glad to help another. Faint emblem this, of fellowship that needs no emulation. Notice a multitude nerved by a common heroism, energized by a single purpose to save. A fellow-creature is shut among the burning rafters,—walled in by the smoke. Some run for ladders; some bind firm ropes; some give their shoulders heartily, that others may reach the sills;—and when one mounts above the rest, rising to the poise of crisis, facing the fierce flame—hark! how they cheer him with a shout, while tears well in their eyes. Spirits of glory work thus always, crowding about Immanuel, when he comes to save.

There will be possession, in that regenerate day, of this regenerate home. Every one will have the whole of it. Do I not own the morning? Is not the sea mine? Would I thank one to give me a star ray, that I might cut it out, and hide it in a cave? Would I engross a wave crest? A child says, Ah, see my home! Talking naively;—say you so?—Talking profoundly, rather.—Come, see my grass! Aye, God's grass and yours.

So in the broad acres of the world to be, new men will meet and mingle, and each one will say, I love my heaven and many mansions,—as now a patriot says, I love my country and its many plains.

And as in a large joint-stock company, where all

the work is done for all, and every profit that accrues belongs to all,—so in the future histories and achievements of this planet when restored to its ulterior uses,—so when fresh worlds are built in space, or fresh displays are elicited, the company of glory, the grand corps of workmen uniformed upon these realms, as now the innumerable company of angels, shall rejoice in all they do, and communicate in all that is, amid the celestial spaces and beneath the eternal throne.

In the same way sex is to cease. But there is a spiritual relation of the sexes. That is, there is a relation between human souls, moulded inwardly as well as that which is manifested by the outer vestment. It is like a gold image run in a clay mould, or an ivory statue carved after a wooden model. Two extremes of error prevail now. One is the vicious view of the sexes which makes either look upon the other in a fleshly aspect. Fostered by dress, by fashion, by mawkish sentiment, by womanish weakness of life, it perverts the heart. That was the delusion which awoke in Adam's breast and clothed the world with shame. The other notion isolates homes and makes them selfish principalities. It separates a man to his wife and children, a woman to her household, as if there were no brotherly kindness, as if there were no fresh air. In human fellowship, now one of these predominates, now another. They play into each other after all.

But there is to be perennial love eliminated from every true terrestrial, in God's house. Not in a monotony and tame friendliness, as of children in a class. Not in a generalizing show. God's hand wastes no work. Christ's artist genius blots no canvas. He did not knit heart to heart with peculiar cords, just in the sportive extravagance of power. He did not lay these life throbs so carefully side by side, just to dash them apart.

On earth the relations between these spirits are not limited to the transient sanctions of sex. There are others even here. You have a brother whom you love in his manly force and steady fidelity. But you have a sister, not loved in the same way, not the same to you here as a brother. Yet who shall define what it is that constitutes such a distinction? Its delicate imprint is left on the soul life, as of taper fingers on the arm to which they cling. There is to be great change. As when you meet in after years, one whom you had known in the frail vivacities of childhood or within the restraints of school. You see a great transposition. But the identity is there. The love has not died. And there can be no tenderness consecrated in hallowed growth, which shall not bloom again in summer prime of holiness. And there can be no vigor of manly, cordial affection, which will not substantiate itself there. And there can be no regenerate eyes glancing into each other with radiance of love, that do



not vow to meet each other in the rising and the redemption. But that future fellowship passes out of our sight, as baby kisses here, that are almost meaningless plays, come to an age of adolescence and to romantic entrancings. There is the intimacy celestial yet to come. There is the growth of pure seraphic consciousness, and the stir of a fresh sentiment lying dormant in our nature now, as music lies in some untouched harpsichord.

Distance shall cease; but motion shall endure. Journeys shall have no hardships, and shall lose no time. Jealousy will be unknown. Love will be no longer self-love in refraction, but God's love in reflection. We shall look into dear eyes, not to see ourselves there, but to see truth and beauty there. We shall listen to heart throbs next ours, that tell, not, as now, of hope and fear mingled to plaintive melody, but that tell of rest—rapture. We shall need to make no vows of constancy, for all are constant in the constancy of God. We shall have no quick tremors of concern, for there is the flash of pure perception in the azure. We shall have no tingling blush of shame, for there is the flush of irradiating glory haloing all. We shall never tire, for there is no reactive, finite need. We will plan no meager entertainments, for life entertains us, and it is ever everlasting life. We shall dream no turbid dream of hope and beauty, for it is beauty on the sight that

needs no sleep—supernal company, open to all, yet celestial endearment within all, as a gem sparkles in transparent glass—glory particular within generic glory, as gold in the mine, as fragrance in a flower. We shall be visited and visiting, but at home for evermore—a solo, a duet, within the choral anthem, like leaf joy in the stirring trees.

There is vastly more awaiting each of us in future recognition than we have yet dreamed. It is not limited to a momentary stark stare, a mental glance along the lines of an immense throng, from a balcony of judgment. Do men mean to reduce the consummation to a pantomime? Do they dream that eternity is but a bubble of time, the spray of its agitation? Time is the foam of eternity, the fathomless ocean. God meant as much when he gave you a friend, as when he gave you a being, when he kindled your heart to the glow of such love as when he bid it beat. There are no trifles to God. And if two spirits reach that country, that loved each other under these cloudy, cold skies, and upon this bare, stern-browed earth, they shall know each other better, they shall love each other more beneath the heavens that radiate glory, and on the earth stainless and sparkling.

Yonder mountain is not a vaporous dimness, nor a thin, disappearing phantom of nature, although our eyes are too feeble to traverse the distance, and these

spreading mists wrap it from our vision. When the sky is blue, and the atmosphere transparent, the solid tower stands against the horizon at ease, and the white locks of the summit glisten above, as if they would sprinkle us with their summer dew and their winter flakes.

And the awe-crowned, majestic mount of God,—the mount of God which is to lift the earth to heaven, which is to bow the heavens to earth—mist-ing now upon our vision, melting sometimes into vapor, steeped in gloom, and cloaked with clouds, and dwindled by the distance, as if it were not, as if it were a vision, or a dream—is there unchanged. Sometimes when faith's sky is clear, and this atmosphere is luminous in Christ's smile, it stands out so boldly, it draws so nigh, as if the distance were a mere step of thought, as if the summit stooped to kiss us—but always it is there, clad in evergreens, kindred immortals. The day dawns of access and of ascent; and when we climb its lofty peaks, and shout in its celestial breezes, and sit upon its gentle slopes, and seize its tireless, endless prospects, it shall be a home to us as solid in its structure and as rooted in its base, as it is lofty in its grandeur and eternal in its ages, and we shall find in the restitution of all things, the restoration of every hallowed tie, the plenitude of every sacred fellowship, the reward of every Christian love. Sometimes after long ab-

sence, and the vicissitudes of years, we return once again, and perhaps once for all, to an earthly homestead, where the silver locks are whiter, and the golden ringlets flash with sunnier hues, and while that tremulous voice quavers in the blessing cry of humble supplication, blended with a tone of patriarchal majesty, and while soft eyes melt, and eagle eyes glitter at the board, and hearts surcharged, vent fitfully, the only sadness steals in sweetness from a portrait on the mantel, the only sigh broods an instant over some grave, imprisoning a form that should have throbbed at our side. That is a touching hour. But there comes a day alike of nobler thanksgiving and of sweeter feasting—a scene of richer rapture and of brighter brilliance,—a home where there shall be no child far away in heaven, and no parent tottering thither,—a home where heaven shall bring its company, and shed its glory, and lift its psalm, and strike its harp. And we shall walk upon the spotless earth with those with whom we loved to walk, and talk with those whose talk was joy, and sing with those with whom we sang God's praise.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ULTIMATE INTENT.

**THE FUTURE OF FUTURES.—PLANTING FOR SEED.—MINUTENESS IMPLIES BREADTH.—WHOLESALE STORE MOST CAREFUL OF TRIFLES.—SPIRITUAL LIVES VALUABLE AS PRESENT SPECIMENS, BUT ULTERIOR REFERENCE.—THAT THE CLUE TO THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE AND UNFINISHED WORKS.—THE EGG PROBLEM.—ALL EXISTENCE FOR OTHERS, AND SO APPREHENDED.—THE SUN USE.—ANGEL SERVICE.—HEAVEN CLAIMED.—PROBLEM OF THE SUN'S CREATION SEEN FROM ITS UNFINISHED DISK.—SO THE GLOBE FORMING ANOTHER HUMAN RACE MATERIAL FOR NEW RACE.—ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PHILOSOPHY.—WORK VISIBLE.—ULTIMATE DESIGN TO MAKE THE INFINITE VISIBLE.—CHARM OF USEFULNESS HERE.—THE CHARITABLE HAND.—THE ARTIST HEAD.—THE PHYSICIAN.—BUT A USEFULNESS.—FOR EVER.—SERVICE.—THE CHURCH ORGAN.**

**I**NCESSANT, fresh creations from the hand of God, incessantly extend the reference of his praise. When we speak of his glory as displayed by his works, we forget that ultimate glory which is yet to be displayed. When we think of the Future, we do not often think of the Future of Futures. Our far reach is only the proximate stage of his purpose. He plants his seed of truth, as we think, to gather his harvest of righteousness. But he sows and harvests, only to accumulate further seed, for a planting beyond. Even in the present world, every regenerate life has, as we see, its true transcendentalism. It is born and bred for further purpose. And this is the legitimate

appeal for prompt and early faith. Within the cabinet of celestial curiosities, within the storehouse of the living God, there is a niche, a name, for every specimen. In proportion to the breadth of compass is the minuteness of detail. Forest trees may have more or fewer leaves, but no forest leaf can dispense with one of its fibers.

If you go into one of these wholesale commercial establishments, or vast, gigantic manufactories, you will find the assortment so accurate, that a little thing is sooner missed than it would be in a cramped and crowded shop of meager dimensions, where all is jumbled and uncertain. So in God's assortment of lives. His vastness of arrangement requires his exactness of minuteness. Every specimen, every life, has its own bearing on the universe.

The kind of religion that can be produced in the present state of the church could not be produced before, and can not be, by and by. What we could be, no one else can be. What we can do, no other can. It is vain, therefore, to mimic or to reproduce the past. If there are to be revivals, they are to be new. If more true hearts shall enter the church, they will be like more children in the family, to be told apart, and just enough alike that they can be told apart. That is the progress of the church; that is the reason why God values such petty, paltry specimens.

But the reason is ulterior still. We call to mind its final reference. The souls that are illustrative specimens in the present, are to be memorial specimens, mementoes, in the future.

All mysteries of this life resolve themselves by reference. Most of what goes on here, has no meaning, no solution on the spot. Science, whether physical or moral, explains just so much of life here as you could explain of a table which you should see set out at an inn. You would say,—this is certainly for people who will eat and drink. They are to be nourished and strengthened for some work. Or you go further and say—these are travelers coming from the east and going to the west; but who they are, and whither they go, is more than I can tell. So with life here in its provisioning stages.

Suppose that you had the egg problem to solve in a state of ignorance. You see an egg lying there loosely in a nest. A strange conceit, you think, to make it with so odd a shape, and so thin a shell,—a shell made just too hard to be relished, just too thin and brittle to be strong. By and by you encounter the hatching absurdity. A dull, meditative fowl sits there, and droops and broods, until you are tired of the case, and pronounce it a wasteful freak of nature. At length you find out the careful instinct and the nicety of law that framed that egg-shell for the coming bird, and filled it with his food, just enough,

and tempered his beak to be strong enough, to break it just at such a time, and you admire the economy of ulterior uses.

If our eyes were open, we should see that this oval globe is but an egg, and that what we call time, is but the incubation of eternity, and that what we call mystery, is but the motherliness and patient brooding of celestial love.

And it is the ulterior destiny of this globe which scatters all difficulties, and dismisses every doubt; a reference to which gives us clear vision. We have sometimes wished that we could stand outside and see it as a whole. It would be a great thing to be far enough apart, as from a picture or a piece of work, and see how this planet looked among the stars; for so we should acquire a notion of its relative value. The law of relative existence,—of purpose, and ulterior bearing, is one which we perceive at a glance elsewhere.

A child looks at the sun, and says at once, God made the sun to give us light by day. Is the child wrong? But the astronomer goes further. He says, The sun is center of a system, and was made to regulate the spheres.

If man thinks of celestial spirits, he straightway names them angels, messengers; and there has been no poetry, and there has been no piety, which has not reposed at ease, alike under their flapping and their



folded wings; there has been no mythology, there has been no ethereal sentiment, fluttering to fly, which has not called to them, and challenged them with claim of kindred, and with tone of familiarity, as if the very fact that they were conscious beings, were proof plenary that they could not be living for themselves but for others, and for all. Human hope has bespoken their sympathy in its flights, as naturally as ships at sea hail other ships, and give them packets to bear home, heeding not that they are of larger caliber or of swifter sail. And heaven! Ah! how deliberately and at ease the soul sings to itself, There is a happy land, far, far away,—as if to reach it were to own it—as a child fears not to pick a flower by the wayside—as an emigrant encamps on the prairie.

Now this law of use in the universe, of ultimate purpose, when it is once applied to this world, transforms it altogether.

Imagine that you had witnessed the creation of the sun orb,—if you choose to call it so, the erection of the sun. Whatever be your theory of its creation, whether by nebulous rings that were stricken off in the whirl of all things, or in the growth and glow of the fused nucleus, as fire seen from a distance glows and grows,—take your theory and stand still there, and watch, until the sun is made, and God shall say,—It is finished, it shines. There can be conceived no mystery greater than that, no problem more unsatisfac-

tory, as seen from within. Suppose yourself to be a sun atom standing there on the minute ledge of a beam, at a focus sheltered by lingering shadow, or a cloud of denser vapor. It is only a little even there that you can see. But imagine that you know much besides. Your solar science tells you what is going on. Disks of light like disks of blood in incessant change of phase. Precipices of black volcanic rupture, ravines in which no green thing grows, down which no flow is fathomed. Shoots of splendor, then star-like shapings, then terrible convulsions, booming shocks, and still the heat roars, and the light, penciling away, changes its form. Ages pass; and the disk always furnishing itself with a wavy sheen, rolls on through space, calm in its blazing, steadfast in its fierceness, gentle in its wild intensity, moving onward with such strides of tranquil power that it scarcely seems to move—moving faster than sight yet always seen. You stand and study, or you live and joy, but you hear at last this simple, wondrous secret whispering through space,—He has appointed the sun for seasons. It was a vast undertaking. It was an elaborate design. It is a terrible exhibition. It is a transcendent achievement. It is to the praise of his glory, afterwards and elsewhere.

Such is the ulterior destiny of this globe—such the drift and turbulence of human life in its flow.

The latter exists for the purpose of furnishing ma-

terial and support, to erect a new heavens and new earth. How much of it goes into that use, and how much is to be neutralized and sunken in other space, is not for us to say. Existing laws are the present implements of the new Creator. He may employ others by and by.

Humanity exists as the material out of which to fashion a new race. History is the formation and the transition stage. .

There is strict analogy between history and geology in their researches. The race like the globe, has marked its periods by its strata. All the story of the human family is like the story of a tree in the forest, out of which a beam is to be carved—or of a forest on the mountain, from which is cut the timber for a boat or a house. Philosophy itself has found this out. The races have been severed, and trained and smitten in collision, as by tools. At this moment they are being mortised and grooved together. Philosophy itself hears the sound of the adze, and sees the chips and shavings. We do not undertake to say that the last type, the culminating specimen of man, shall be Anglo-Saxon. God only knows. He might mean to make it Arab, or negro, for that matter, by the way in which he has hammered those races and cut them. He has not finished yet his history work.

But he is building a church—a true church—a

living church—out of every nation. He takes specimens from every race and caste and class and character. He makes a saint out of a little beggar boy; a jewel out of a slimy, sinful soul; he takes a poor, refuse outcast, burned of sin and black with shame—a charcoal splint of time—and renders it a diamond of eternal day; he picks up a gipsy, starveling soul, and traces its title in the archives of eternity to an inheritance of bliss.

The human world will peel off presently from the church, when the church is ripe, as the calix peels and parts from an opening bud. Any student of history sees that it has existed to grow—that it has grown and is growing, with whatever growing shoots of pain and starts of dismay, and pauses of self-perplexity,—into a model man, a typical man. The sciolists, the pedants, the skeptics, the magazine gospels, wait to see him come forth a splendid specimen of bone and muscle, a stalwart giant in the flesh.

But we are taught to wait—the whole creation waits—for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Then, when the church of glory shall displace this church of grace, the globe of glory will dispossess this globe of clay.

The workmanship is visible to soul sight, even now

What if you could see paths intersecting the sky—avenues laid open between this world and yonder

worlds? We do see such paths to every star, to every realm of principality and power;—shadowy forms and lustrous forms flit over them, noiselessly plying their labors. For the new creatures that are to make home here, are not to hold existence for themselves. The universal law of ulterior use underlies the compass of redemption. It was no mere pity for men that moved the Son of God to such an undertaking.

He had a grand scope of all things in his eye.

That which redeemed, regenerate humanity shall display, nearly concerns all creatures. It is the solution of their intimacy with the Creator. It is the mode in which the Infinite and the Finite can meet and mingle. It is God's heart that is to be reflected. He polishes a mirror to reflect his heart,—making his name intelligible in Christ,—in Christ his face visible.

His hand paints a picture of his glory, and it is a miniature of God. His voice utters a sound, and the ransomed church is the instrument to speak it forth for evermore. The church is a concert to interpret it—a specimen of his redeeming mercy and his plastic skill.

It is blessed even now to think of living not in vain.

With what satisfaction does the hand of charity lie on the coverlid of rest at night,—and on the driven

coverlid of rest in death. How nobly the artist's head bears itself in placid and meek stateliness, thinking,—I have blessed my fellow-man. How kindly the glance of the skillful physician, weary though it be and wan with wakefulness, looking this thought,—I have healed a malady, at least have helped to soothe a pain. How soft the pressure of a benefactor's fingers. Even here, it is blessed not to live in vain. It is beautiful, as a twinkling light or fragrant flower. But what there, to live for ever, and not to live in vain? To have an ultimate scope, to which all works follow, to which all joys radiate, to which all trials look? To live in the new creation, and be an angel to carry gladness and joy; to go upon some chosen errand, like those who hovered over Bethlehem? To be to the praise of divine glory, and the buoyancy of life on high?

We can not foresee the power, the use, to which that life shall summon us.

Look at a church organ, and listen to its silvery strains; or its loud shout. Then come away hundreds of miles; let us go to the forest. See a tree, among uncounted trees, tossing restlessly, murmuring in the breeze. That tree must die. The relentless ax heeds not its creaking. It falls prone on the earth. It looks like a helpless, hopeless, useless thing, unless to burn away. But now its wood, seasoned and saved, gives forth notes of

heaven—glory sounds. For years to come it stirs us, and it cheers us, or our children when our frames lie low.

So, child of God, you too must die.

But God builds an organ,—what countless pipes, of infinite variety,—the church of God. Slow work it sometimes seems, and dismal tuning. But presently, in every burst of ordered nature, and in every pipe of faculty, and from every stop of mood, it shall speak. And they shall hear it yonder—they shall hear it evermore.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CHANGELESS CHANGE.

ETERNITY.—THE STAR AND THE FIELD.—THE STAR AND THE SEA.—THE EVER-LASTING HILLS.—CHANGE OF SCENE IN ETERNITY, AND OF MODE IN ETERNAL LIFE ALREADY.—FURTHER EVENT.—SECURITY OF NEW RACE IN SECOND MAN.—NO INDEFINITE PERSONAL CHANGE.—FAULTS PERFECT ONCE FOR ALL.—EAR.—EYE.—CONTRAST WITH PROGRESS HERE.—THE DEATH PROBLEM.—ENCOUNTERED BY EVERY THEORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.—SOLVED HERE.—PROGRESS BEFORE THE SPIRIT.—PRESENT LIFE IN ITS STUDIES AN ISLAND TO EXPLORES.—CONTRAST OF IMMORTAL STUDY.—LEISURE.—NO REPETITIONS.—THE ONWARD.—THE TWO TIME SPIRITS IN THEIR FLIGHT.

THE real difference between eternity and time, is, that in eternity, change of condition ceases. Events that transpire, scenes that alternate, are all enclosed within an empyrean of repose, that engirds the spiritual being, and admits no change to reach it.

The same difference subsists between time and eternity, as between a field, and a star that looks out upon that field. In one sense the star has motion and event. It has incessant revolution—twinkling always. We can suppose its vision of the field distinct. It watches the frozen ridges as they melt to peeping buds. It sees the mystery furrows wave in golden grain—insect generations vanish, and nimble creatures running to and fro. That star looks also on



the sea. It has a sea life. It measures toss—and ponders their dashing utterances. It profound fissures. It pleases itself with spots; and withal it gives its lavish beaming. It knows the mariner's trembling, and at oaths and cruelties. It glances pityingly wrecks; but it sees a coast of further life the billows. It is obvious, even at this point any eternal life ceases to be busy with itself as far as it is eternity, it gives itself up to change and goes forth of itself.

This is but a faint emblem.

The eternity of starlight is only relatively simply significant as an illustration. The poet frequently uses relative eternity to symbolize the eternal. In this sense it speaks of the everlasting hills that seem to be everlasting. Men come there to build log cabins in their forests, and spread gardens on their slopes. Then come miners, and minerals and metals. Then great towns and towers rise. Then palatial glories glisten. Then men go wandering; artists go sketching; love comes. Fearful mysteries leap like shadows down the vines. Silent prayers are breathed by the wind, fancy that they are in utter solitude. Then angels come, hovering on the same spot, looking over every feature, as a mother peers over the household when her children are asleep.

morn peers over mountains when travelers have gone by. By and by the old towers lean and crumble. Houses, that were air cells of humanity, collapse;—mounds stand long neglected. Grass-tufted rows cover the furrows of inexplicable futures. The paths fade. The roads are overgrown. Emigrants retire. Antiquarians come and turn over old stones. Odd travelers light on ruin piles, and chatter like magpies—then take sudden flight. Still again;—desolate and still? No, by no means desolate! Bird flocks come back from their expulsion. Beasts roam in luxurious content. Flowers spring up again in their own right, as heirs long defrauded come to their estate. Forests grow, like hair over a wounded head. And the everlasting hills wait, till another company of pioneers shall come, claiming a manifest destiny to dwell for ever on this spot, ignorant that any race had been before them. Faint emblem of eternity, that amid its eons upon eons, is to suffer no invasion and no loss. The new song of the skies is to be the fresh version, and the chorus swell, of the strain which began when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

There occurred a change of dispensation on high, at the first introduction of the spirits of just men made perfect among the innumerable company of angels. Another occurs at the resurrection of the just.

The next era is described as a spectacle to princi-

palities and powers in heavenly places. That era is the taking up this globe into glory, probably with the same effect in the spiritual realm that occurs in the natural, when a hemisphere is illuminated. To an inhabitant of the sun—overlooking this globe—the sunshine would seem to take in that hemisphere, and create it out of darkness and void. So the spiritual world is to be expanded and spread over this globe. And the divine Word makes no disguise of an ultimate fact, which yet is too far off to be seen distinctly. The state of glory ensuing at the resurrection is to change into another phase.

But the second man, throughout all phases retains the safety of his race in himself. No condition of man regarded as a free agent, and disintegrated from divine nature, would be perfectly safe. Surround it by influences,—invest it with impulses,—render it superior, in charm of good, and celestial attraction, to that of Adam, to that of angels who fell,—and still free agency must admit a possible fall. Hem it in too closely, and you impair it. Hold it by any other cords than those of affection, and you do it violence,—you make a mechanical force, not a vital holiness. But leave it unguarded, and although there might be a strong probability from motives, in favor of permanent righteousness, there could be no security. And the mere possibility of peril is terrible, in proportion to the loss that would ensue. If you

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are walking on the sublime ledge of the cataract, the thought of fall is more fearful. If you have a sweet home, an outcast plight is the more terrible.

The thought of retention is an element of maturity.

Souls here are children growing, children at school, and think of no progress which does not involve a present change. But there is such a thing as a soul majority to be attained. There is a permanence of personality. There is a posture of rest, at last, needing no more development. It is to be admitted that when life once reaches heaven, it has reached all that a human spirit can ever become, all that it can ever have, of perception or of power, as faculties. But these faculties will be furnished with endless variations of material.

Give me an ear, exquisitely quick, and studiously trained to discriminate musical sound. Then let the limitless range of harmony open before me. Harmony within harmony—harmony elicited from harmony—harmony reshaped from apparent discord. Give me every vibrant string and every modulating breath. Give me ten thousand times ten thousand stops, and instruments that swell on instruments, and I shall enjoy them aright, only when my ear rests in its authoritative interpretation, and my soul craves no other ear. My ear is finite, but it hears the infinite. That is the changelessness of perfect life, in the music of the soul.

Give me an eye that never tires, and that needs no sleep. Give me an eye that travels on its own piercing beams—seeing as well afar as near,—as fully the minute as the magnified,—an eye that is a telescope and microscope at once; then let it go, tireless and unforbidden, from the pebbly sparkles and the floweret beauties, here about it, to the stellar pediments above it and beyond it. Let it gaze on the throne undazzled, undisturbed, and still retain the luxury of contact here, and soft blending glances of fellowship. Let there be among the myriads that make heaven's hosts, and on the earth, new peopled of redemption, no tumultuous throng,—no emulous and ambitious stirrs for place,—and then you will have no further need to put flimsy questions as to where heaven is, or to make paltry calculations of a miserable economy—how the sons of God shall find room to stand on this regenerate floor. Every glance will inspect another of uncounted, matchless beauties. Fresh creations will spring up, as if spontaneously. I shall be always looking on a prospect, as from a window open in peaceful rest. But it will carry me forward and beyond, by its perennial change, and show me the revenues of God.

Here, to get a new thing, is to give up the old. There, to get a new thing, is to fulfill the old. Here, to keep an old thing, is to see it fade, and love its age not as you loved its youth, but somehow plaintively.

Here to take a new thing, is to stare at its novelty, and to feel its newness, and to love it somewhat timidly, uncertainly. But there, there is neither new nor old—there is a steadfast freshening of all things. Here, incessant change washes my life shore like a tide, leaving me more shells to gather, but leaving only shells. There, incessant change brings me fresh treasures home, as waves bring ships to port. Here, to make a new friendship, often debilitates the old, or else forgets it. There, every friendship is a furtherance, an intensity of all. Here, I can not see the children growing up, but by seeing the strong men running down. There, we shall stand together and never fail. That which is venerable here is passing—that which is dewy with youth is only coming. There, that which is venerable is that which is young, and that which is coming has already come. Here, to visit is to leave home—to come home is to relinquish companionship. There, to be together is to be at home—to be at home is to be in boundless fellowship. Here, every morrow makes to-day a yesterday, and every to-day stands faltering between the two. There, to have to-day is to have yesterday, and the to-morrow is to-day. Here, day is known by night, and night can only wait for morning. There, dawn never fades, and tireless day-time needs no night.

We say much of progress as a law. But the ultimate attainment is not often scanned. Theories of

progress, systems of perfectible humanity, come up to a barrier, the sooner, the more they are developed.

If you clear the forests, and fill up the swamps of a region between a town and the bank of a river, you shorten the road. Instead of being ten days, it is five days, long. So, if you civilize life by cutting away its evils, and settling its troubles, you only make it briefer, in its conscious journey. It is harder for a rich man to die than the poor. It must be sadder for cultured society, than for the rough and the rude, to come to an end. That progress of humanity which makes this world a sweeter home, would make it more painful to leave it. So that there can be no real solution of the destiny of the race, which does not grapple with the barbarism of death. It is very little to civilize man's mortality to a morality, unless you can evangelize it to an immortality. In a golden age, it would be a terrific thing to die.

The ultimate civilization must include a condition of perennial life. There must at least be a longevity as great as that of any book, of any hill.

The schemes of development which are fluent about us do not grasp this problem.

They would prepare life as ornamented matches, or colored candles, to burn away. They would elaborate frost work of confectionery to melt at the taste.

But our vision embraces the picture of a deathless race, standing again on a crystallized sphere. That

stand-point gained, and there is an onward, indeed. What an Onward! Imagine yourself to have stood by the side of any student five hundred years ago. Imagine yourself to have been a student then. Suppose natural science to have been your favorite pursuit. Let all these disclosures, which have come in their fragmentary hints to different men, have come steadily to you, one by one, biding their time, but true to their time. Let the law of gravitation have asserted itself in your lifetime; and the circulation of the blood, and the electric forces and the magnetic secrets—while in all unsolved questions, and all entangled problems, you could say,—I will wait another hundred years. Men have not learned this.

The world stands now like an island in the ocean. A boat's crew come straying on it. They cut niches in rocks, notches in trees. They build cabins, hide treasures under ground, leave sign boards. By and by they desert it. Then another company of men chance there. They begin to explore and at same time to invent. Two kinds of advance are contemporaneous. But they confuse each other. There are two parties. One pleads for originality, and says, Abandon your antiquities,—your journeys over these rocks and through these woods. Let us make every thing new as if no one had been here. The other says, Not so, let us adhere to the search. Let us follow them out. One is radical, the other conserva-



tive. One is philosophy, the other learning. Such is much culture of human thought now. How long a student must study to be able to interpret the studies of others. And then to pass beyond. Research is too antique for philosophy and poetry. And youth is an emblem of a short-lived race—so young. How hard to dig up Nineveh and Herculaneum ;—Rome and Athens are spelled and not yet read.

Or suppose that event, and historic humanity, had been your favorite path.

Put yourself by the side of the star described,—your vision working for centuries on all that passes, as that orb twinkles on growing trees, on crumbling rocks, on the grass of ages and the men of years. Dwell there, and listen to the earth's poem,—not in a canto of it, not in snatches of it, but as its lines groove one in the other and its chapters couple.

You take up a book sometimes, and read a page, —then again catch it somewhere else, but make very little of it, especially if it be a connected story. Suppose you had to take it by odd sentences. So the race has taken up the tragedy of Time, the drama of spaces. But it is a life drama, closely interwoven, worthless unless you can scan it all and ponder it. What a luxury to one who loves social study to walk the streets of life and observe human histories in full. Or, to the recluse of meditation, to sit and dream without exhaustion, without waste. To the pedes-

trian, to walk on tireless feet, amid fadeless beauty. To the artist to sketch new scenes for ever.

Now, the first postulate of celestial civilization—the prime ingredient in the times that are to come—is immortality. That includes not only duration that has no fear of end, but duration free from peril, from decay. To that race, in its security, will belong the field of thought, in amaranthine flower—the forest of sublimity, in evergreen repose—the stars of glory, in fadeless effulgence. The advance of that race will not be as when a traveler hurries over a country, passing swiftly through, because he has only so much time for his tour, so that his very zeal becomes his confusion. But it will be a calm posture, to which, and around which, the disclosure of all things comes, as the hours in the day and the clouds in the sky go athwart the steady vision of a patient mountain. Nor is there any risk that the immortal hand will turn over the pages of truth with tired touch—as a child knows a story book by heart. The new race of man will never have to read God's library over and over. God's voice will never repeat stale stories or stale sermons. It is to be supposed that there is no truth incomprehensible in itself, or even, properly speaking, difficult of comprehension. It is either remote, or it is involved. Two conditions of the mind to match these, must be,—clearness of vision and time for study. These must avail, as surely

as all truth is interlinked, and one thread of thought suggests another. To the children of the second Adam, amid incessant phases of the Infinite, the finite always will be surpassed, but always satisfied—God always a God—not growing less a God, but growing more a God, as man is more a man of God. But the picture of that private study, and that social joy, let some angel artist sketch.

There is an onward life to which time's flight invites us cheerily.

They tell us that our life is vanishing; that it takes with it our strength, our joy, our beauty, and our dearly beloved. It is false. There is nothing gone from us. He has no time who has not an eternity. But he who has eternity, has time enough. We love the wild, high-flying spirit whom men call Time. They have pronounced him treacherous and cruel. They have painted him like an old wizard, winged, to bear away his victims in his talons. That is not the spirit whom we see. We see an angel, young with the youth of all eternity—his brow bedewed in its starry dawn. He folds his arm about our treasures, and he beckons us with a smile. Further, further onward, upward, heavenward, homeward.

There are two Time spirits. Yours, you say, fellow-man, is an old frowning tyrant,—the spirit of fallen time. His wings are gone, and in their stead, bony ridges, brown and grim, terrify you. Death at-

tends him, say you, and the grave, as vultures follow beasts of prey. But the Time spirit we see, is Christ's angel,—the page that carries his crown in the vast procession of eternity. Your Time, you say, is the grave digger in the universe. That which is effete, that which is corrupt, that which shrivels in godlessness, as a leaf detached from a tree, he buries it, he hides it in the dust and darkness, that it may never more defile the new creation. But our Time is the bell ringer of the universe. He strikes the hours even now—the hours measured, though they seem so long. Presently he will peal the chimes. He calls all living things to the tabernacle of glory. He beckons us on. Onward, O life, to live! Onward, O man, to Paradise! Come back again, ye children of the first man, to Eden. The second man, the second Adam, has taken possession for you. No more sin, no more death, no more exile. Presently you shall hear the trumpet calling. Then will spring the new race to its feet, and stand forth fresh made, from the dust, and from the clouds. Life is a Unit, in all space and time, the same secret of the living God,—Here and Beyond.

THE END.













